

1991
NFL & College
FOOTBALL
Preseason Analysis

Interview: Bill Parcells • Chicago Cubs • NBA Draft Preview

INSIDE

SPORTS

JULY 1991

1991 NFL & COLLEGE
FOOTBALL'S

HOT
Questions

JOE MONTANA

Is there another
season in those
ancient 49ers?

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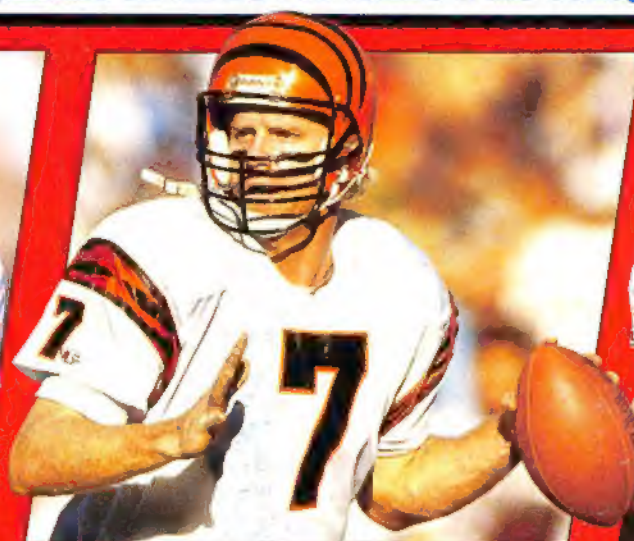
JEFF HOSTETLER

Can he take that
Giant step into the
starting backfield?



JIM KELLY

Did the bickering Bills hit
their peak last season?



BOOMER ESIASON

Does his drop-off last season mean
the boom has ended for the Bengals?

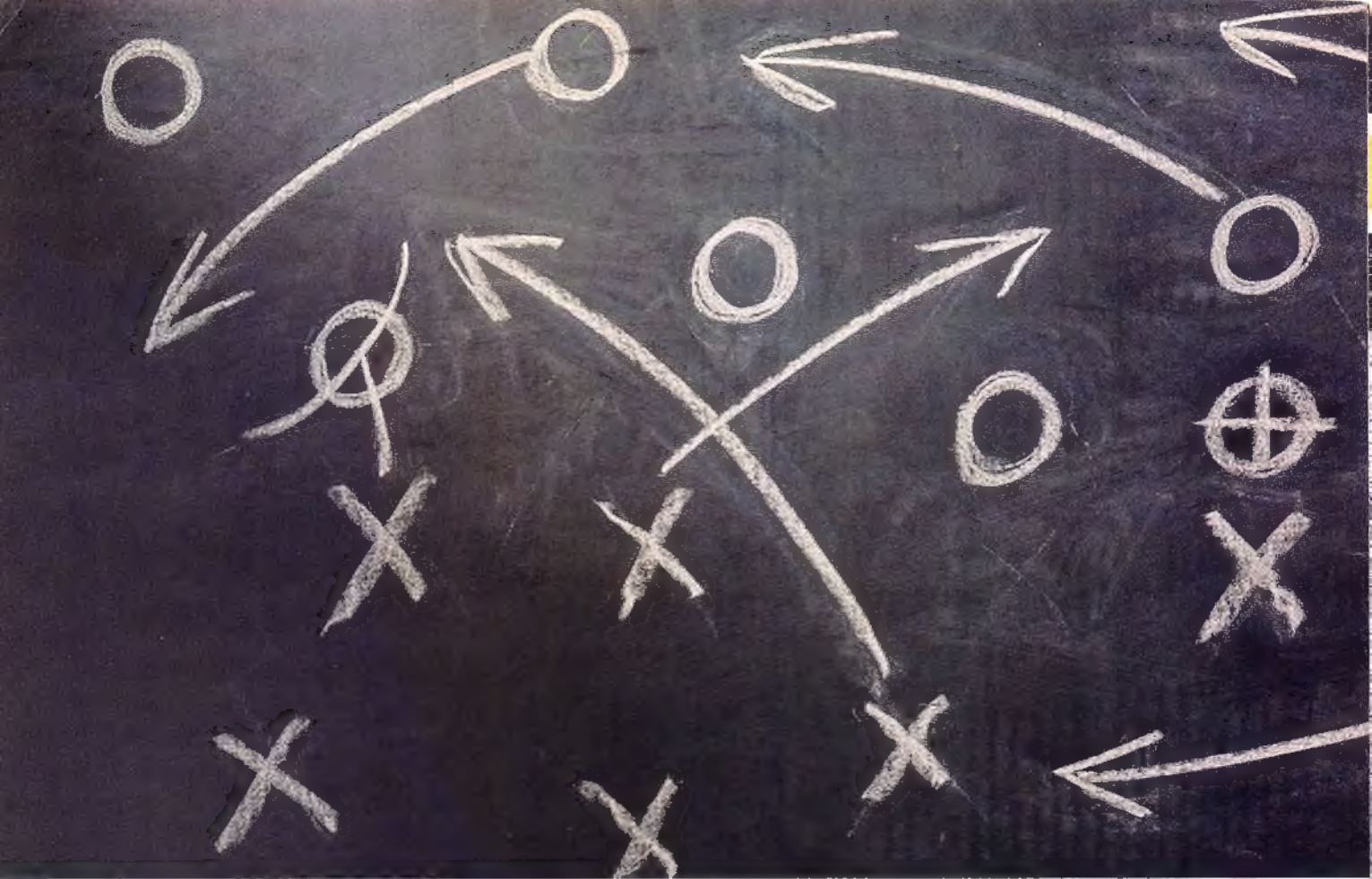


DAN MARINO

Have we seen the last of his
gunslinging for the Dolphins?

NOTRE DAME

Can Holtz Replace The Rocket?

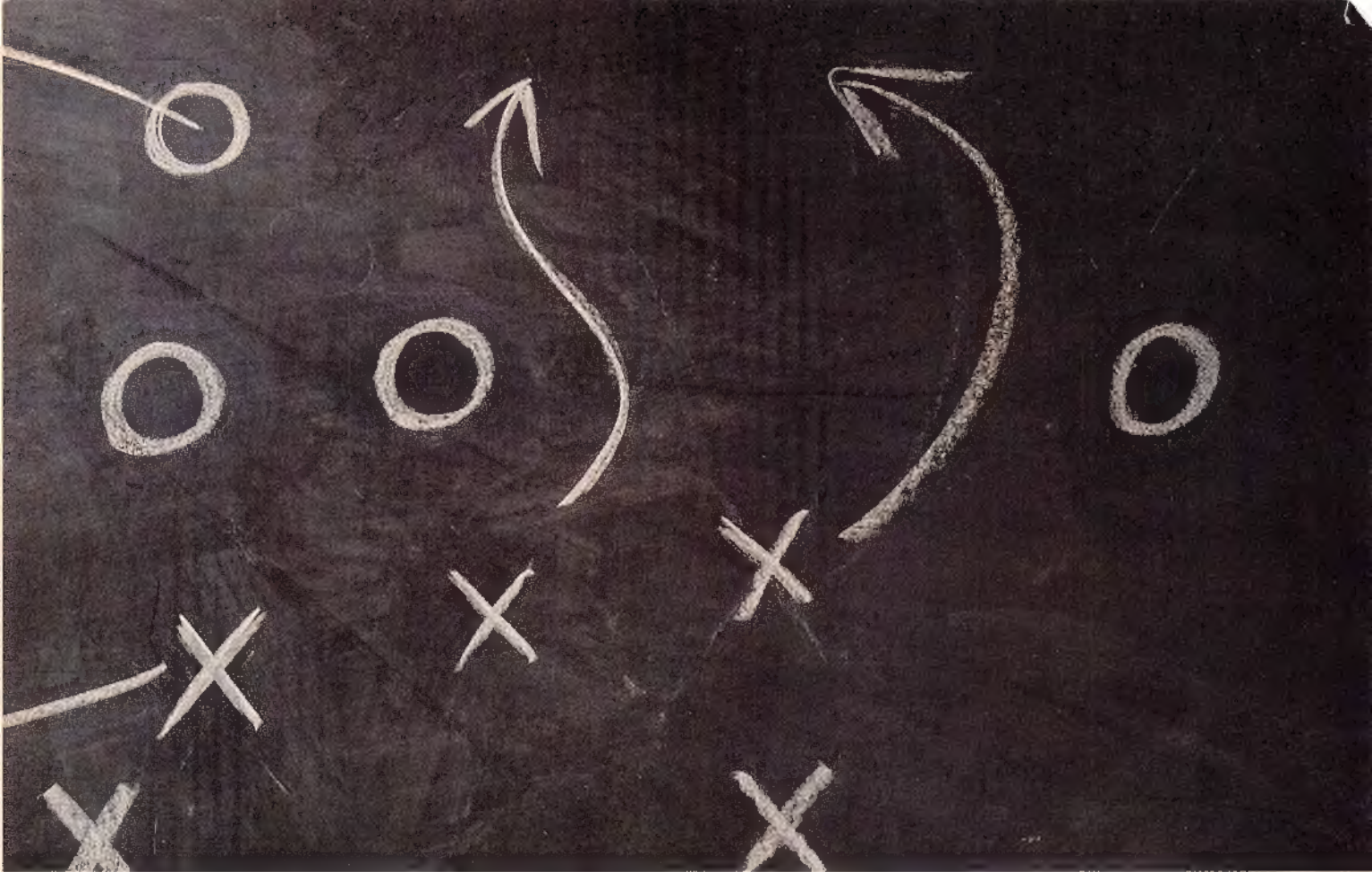


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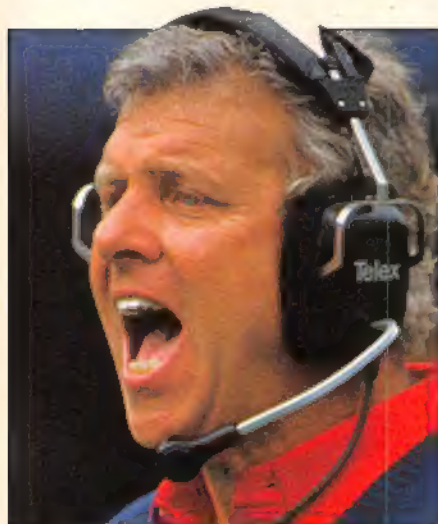
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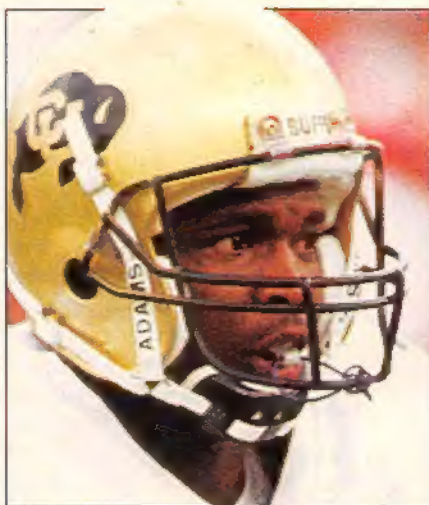
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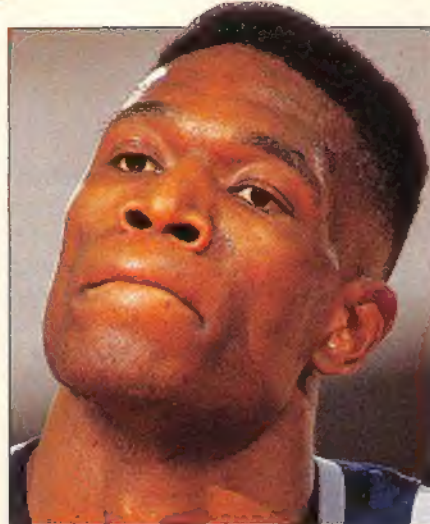




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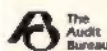
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Cover: Joe Montana by Fotosports International; Jeff Hostetler, Jim Kelly, Boomer Esiason, Dan Marino, Marcus Allen, and Randall Cunningham by Ron Vesely; Troy Aikman by Bob Rosato; Mike Ditka by Andrew Bernstein; Barry Sanders by Brian Masck/Allsport.



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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Inside Sports, P.O. Box 346, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0346. GST #R126009406

AS THE PRO AND COLLEGE FOOTBALL seasons approach, many teams are gearing up for a run at the championship. Each new season brings different players, expectations, promises—and a lot of questions. For example, who will the New York Giants start at quarterback, **Phil Simms** or **Jeff Hostetler**? The coach of the two-time Super Bowl champions, **Bill Parcells**, has a problem that many National Football League coaches would love to have and one that the New York media and fans will no doubt thrive on.

In our annual "Hot Questions" section, beginning on Page 30, *INSIDE SPORTS* looks at the new football season by analyzing the questions that face each team, the critical issues, and the players on the bubble. Pro



SIMMS

football experts Paul Needell, Greg Garber, and Gary Myers tackle this year's hottest questions: Do the 49ers have anything left? Have the Lions given up on **Andre Ware**? Can **Marty Schottenheimer** win in the playoffs? Can **Victor Kiam** keep his feet out of his mouth?

On the collegiate level, one of the hottest questions appears to be: Is this the year **Bobby Bowden's** Florida State team produces a national championship? Or who will replace **Hockett Ismail** as Mr. Everything for the Irish this season? Writers Brad Buchholz and Mark Blandschun pose a hot question for each team in the major college conferences as well as look at the independents in scanning that beat for answers.

Speaking of college football, a transformation has taken place in terms of offensive thinking among many college coaches. There appears to be a trend away from the traditional power offenses with the straight formations to more of a reliance on finesse offenses and multiple sets. Join football expert Brad Buchholz as he looks at the changing of the guard in college offensive strategy on Page 54.



BOWDEN



JACKSON

When you speak of NFL coaching legends, the names **George Halas**, **Vince Lombardi**, **Don Shula**, **Chuck Noll**, and **Joe Gibbs** come to mind. However, a new member recently has been inducted into the fraternity of coaching legends, the guy with this year's QB problem—**Parcells**. Writer Edward Kiersh recently had an opportunity to speak with the workaholic coach. **Parcells** reflects on the Giants' glorious season, the Giants organization, coaches who influenced him, his superstitions, and the pressure that exists for an NFL coach. This lively interview begins on Page 22.

Ever wonder what National Basketball Association general managers think about when it comes to drafting college players? Find out when you join veteran basketball writer **Charlie Vincent** as he shares the insights of some of the game's top GMs in reflecting on past NBA drafts, beginning on Page 72. With this year's draft right around the corner, we enlisted the help of some top NBA scouts to rate 54 of the top prospects, headed by UNLV's **Larry Johnson** and **Stacey Augmon**. For a look at players who will make a significant impact in the NBA, turn to Page 76.



JOHNSON

It wasn't that long ago when the Chicago Cubs baseball organization was perceived as being complacent, content to finish near the bottom of the standings, and tight with a buck. Well, times have changed. Consider the Cubs' \$26.8 million commitment to free-agents **George Bell**, **Danny Jackson**, and **Dave Smith**. The message is clear: The Cubs want to win. Join Peter Korn as he examines the Cubs' image overhaul. They've gone from lovable losers to one of baseball's most popular organizations. The story begins on Page 66.

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Inside Sports
990 Grove St., Evanston, IL 60201-4370
708/491-6440

Subscription Department

(New subscriptions, renewals, change of address)
Inside Sports
P.O. Box 346, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0346

Photo Credits

Page 5a, Bryan Yablonsky; 5b, 54-55, 59, John Williamson; 5c, 6c, 46b, 50, 77b, Bruce Schwartzman; 6a, 66, 67, 69, Steve Green; 6b, 35, 49, Mitchell Reibel; 6d, B. Frakes/Allsport; 10, Scott Cunningham; 12, Sid Rust; 14, Baseball Hall of Fame; 23, 64, M. Powell/Allsport; 24, 25, 26, 31, 32, 34, 44, 52, 58a, 68, 70, Ron Vesely; 30, Jon SooHoo; 36, J. Commentucci/Allsport; 39, 77c, K. Levine/Allsport; 40, 46a, O. Greule/Allsport; 47, John Tremmel; 48, 51, S. Dunn/Allsport; 56, J. Patronite/Allsport; 58b, Fotosports International; 60, R. Beck/Allsport; 62, S. Halleran/Allsport; 72-73, 77a, Brian Spurlock; 74a, Bill Frakes; 74b, 76, Allsport.



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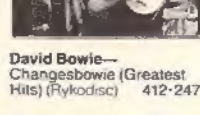
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FIRE IN THE GARDEN

Starks Makes the Sparks Fly

A STEADY LINE OF NEW YORK KNICKS CROWD FAVORITES at Madison Square Garden—dating back to Mike Riordan and Nate Bowman on the championship teams and continuing with Hawthorne Wingo—seemed to end when Greg Butler departed a year ago. But the tradition made a comeback when John Starks made his Garden debut early this past season after coming off the injured reserve list. Playing with the intensity level of a Mike Tyson in basketball garb, the Tulsa-bred Starks had the New York fans rising out of their seats and exchanging high fives in celebration of his long-range rainbow jumpers, fearless drives to the basket, and in-your-face defense. With a mischievous grin that he broke only to exhort his teammates and darting eyes that ceaselessly scanned the court to follow the ball and his man, the guard also found the time and energy to pump up the crowd with waves of his fist.

"When you play hard, the fans appreciate you," says Starks, who's listed at 6'5". "If you go out there and play like a little girl, you're not going to get any fan support."

One of Starks' backcourtmates, 13-year veteran Maurice Cheeks, questioned whether the rookie firebrand could sustain such a high enthusiasm level. "Give him 25 or 30 games and he'll likely come down some," said Cheeks. Upon hearing Cheeks' prediction, though, Starks disagreed: "I doubt that very seriously. I just love the game of basketball. I would be playing on the streets somewhere if I wasn't playing for money." Starks, who emerged as a part-time starter, proved the veteran wrong.

The very fact that Starks has solidified a spot for himself on a National Basketball Association team is startling. Consider this: He only played for his high school team his senior year. Instead of going directly to college, Starks went to work at a supermarket.

After playing at three different colleges in Oklahoma, the razor-thin guard finished up at Oklahoma State University in 1987-88, averaging only 15.4 points. He was not drafted, but stuck with the Golden State Warriors after signing as a free agent. However, after averaging 4.1 points in 36 games he hurt his back, and when he slacked off in his rehabilitation during the offseason, coach/GM Don Nelson cut him.

Last year Starks played in the Continental Basketball Association and joined the 6'4⁷/₈"-and-under World Basketball League in the summer. Then-Knicks GM Al Bianchi sent scouting director Dick McGuire to check him out, and McGuire offered Starks an invitation to training camp. However, just before the season started, Starks knocked himself out of the last spot on the team by spraining his knee in an attempt to jam over Patrick Ewing.

The 25-year-old Starks was an all-star in both the CBA and the WBL, but he does not recall facing a single player in either league who is now a member of an NBA squad. "If you go down with the attitude 'I've dropped to the CBA, the minor leagues of professional basketball,' then you're going to stay down there," says Starks in his soft Oklahoma drawl. "I went down there to improve my game."

"I heard some of the guys down there talking about how this guy got called up and how they should be in the NBA instead of him, but I didn't think about that. It would only get me frustrated. When I was



Knicks veterans such as Gerald Wilkins [21] welcomed Starks' infusion of rookie enthusiasm.

down in the CBA, I never thought about being called up. I knew I could play in this league. No matter what happened, I was always confident of that."

Knicks head coach John MacLeod, a veteran of 18 seasons in the NBA, says Starks' tenacity reminds him of Alvin Scott, a forward who played eight seasons for MacLeod on the Phoenix Suns after being drafted in the seventh round. "He was a tiger," says MacLeod. "Like John, he gave you everything he had."

To make it in the NBA, MacLeod says the no-name player facing almost impossible odds "must not be intimidated. You're going to get checked quick, and if you play soft the word spreads quick. If you play tough like John does, that word spreads, too."

Starks credits his oldest brother, a football player, for "roughing him up" in the grueling Tulsa playground games where he contested baskets with current Sacramento Kings star Wayman Tisdale and former Houston Rocket Anthony Bowie. But surprisingly, he also credits Nelson: "I owe him a lot. He taught me how to be a professional player and helped me become more of a man."

It's hard to imagine a player of Starks' ability languishing too long in the CBA. He has shown excellent range and a quick first step. Once he nears the basket, Starks uses his vertical leap of more than 40 inches to score with either hand. Despite his scarred back-ground, the long shot was a good gamble—and Bianchi knows it. "You hope to get lucky once in a while with a kid like Starks," says the former Knicks GM. "Everyone knows the real good players, but sometimes the ones you can steal really help you."

—DANIEL MARKOWITZ



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ALL THE FIELD'S A STAGE

This Colt Gets a Kick out of Acting

MOST FOOTBALL PLAYERS SPEND THEIR TIME LEARNING plays. Dean Biasucci spends his time learning lines. That's because he's not only the Indianapolis Colts kicker, but also a budding actor—a very serious budding actor. Far from a rough-edged Rambo, the 28-year-old Biasucci has concentrated on serious stage acting. He has appeared in productions of Shakespeare, Pirandello, and Tennessee Williams, among many others.

His interest in acting blossomed in college when, as a sophomore, he took a drama course at East Carolina University. "It was a blast," Biasucci says. "I said, 'Why don't I do what I really want to do?'" So he did, abandoning a likely business major for drama to act in many school productions and write his senior thesis on Arthur Kopit's play, "The End of the World."

When he came to the Colts, Biasucci quickly discovered the Indiana Repertory Theater, where he has appeared in many roles, including last summer's portrayal of Marc Antony in Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." While the football season limits his choice of roles, he can always use summer stock—"fast food plays," he calls it—and the offseason to develop his acting talents.

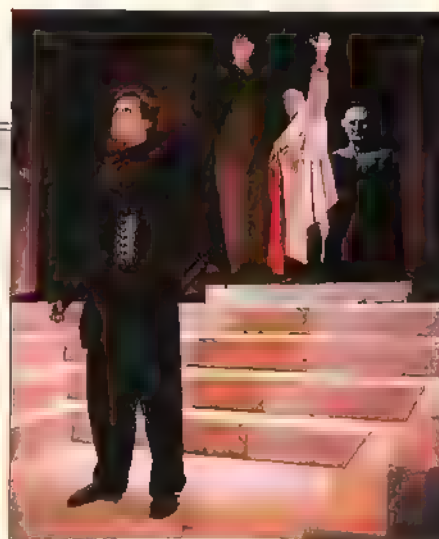
Biasucci believes acting and football have much in common. Both demand discipline and rigorous concentration to block out constant

distractions. Both require endless repetition. And both make use of visualization, whether of a successful kick or of a living, breathing character. "Also," he points out, "actors aren't given nearly enough credit for being in shape."

Biasucci knows he's got a ways to go before he reaches the Broadway lights, but he's confident he'll get there. A self-described "Al Pacino-type" (his teammates call him "Romeo"), he will be looking for roles in the movies as well as on the stage. Currently he's preparing for an audition of Neil Simon's "Biloxi Blues" at New York City's renowned Public Theater.

Can "The Joe Montana Story" be far behind?

—SHELDON SUNNESS



Friends, Hoosiers, countrymen: Biasucci orates as Marc Antony.

MOONLIGHTING

Write-ous Ray and The Pit Bull

MEET RAY BENTLEY, AUTHOR, AND MITCH FREROTTE, wrestler—and, oh yes, a linebacker and offensive lineman, respectively, for the Buffalo Bills. No strangers to the ins and outs of public relations, Bentley and Frerotte made more headlines during Super Bowl week with their second careers than with their on-field performances. Both were willing—no, anxious—to explain all about their moonlighting.

Bentley is the author of a series of children's books featuring a character he created, "Darby the Dinosaur." Underneath his Bills uniform, he wears a T-shirt featuring Darby, who is drawn by former Bills player Mike Hamby. "This was part of my marketing plan, to go to the Super Bowl and get a lot of press," Bentley says with a smile. In fact, he is thinking of placing Darby at the Super Bowl in his next book. "We've talked about it. I'm not sure there'd be a big market for it. But we'll have Darby doing a lot of things from now on."

"He's tough, in a subtle sort of way," Bentley says of the little dinosaur who wears glasses. "These books are didactic. I'm trying to teach these kids a lesson with them."

Bentley hopes to see a Darby doll produced soon. "I'd like to see him be like Mickey Mouse or Peanuts," he says. The character was inspired by Bentley's five-year-old son, Richard, who loves dinosaurs. When Bentley and Hamby were injured in 1986, they got started with the storybooks.

"My wife got tired of us sitting around the house and told us to get out and do something," Bentley says. "Darby is like a member of the family now."

Frerotte's surrogate family does horrible things to one another in the wrestling ring. Known as "The Pit Bull," Frerotte says he took up the sport because pro football is just too tame.

"A football career is too short to be as crazy as I want to be," he says. "Pro wrestling is a chance to have a lot more fun before I have to settle down and get a real job."

His real job in Buffalo mainly consists of special teams duties and occasional fill-in roles on the line. Frerotte gets more attention when he is on the sidelines, feverishly rooting for his teammates—particularly when he applied war paint for more than a half-dozen games toward the end of last season. NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue told the Bills such individualism was a breach of the league's uniform standards.

"The commissioner's letter to the club said it was a personal message, but I wasn't advertising anything," he says. "Besides, all through history, people put war paint on before going out to fight. When you fight, you want your opponent to think you're nuts. And that's all it was in this case."

So you're not even a little bit crazy, Mitch, uh, Pit Bull? "Wait until you see me [in the ring], then decide," he says. "I lean toward being a bad guy. You can be nuttier that way."

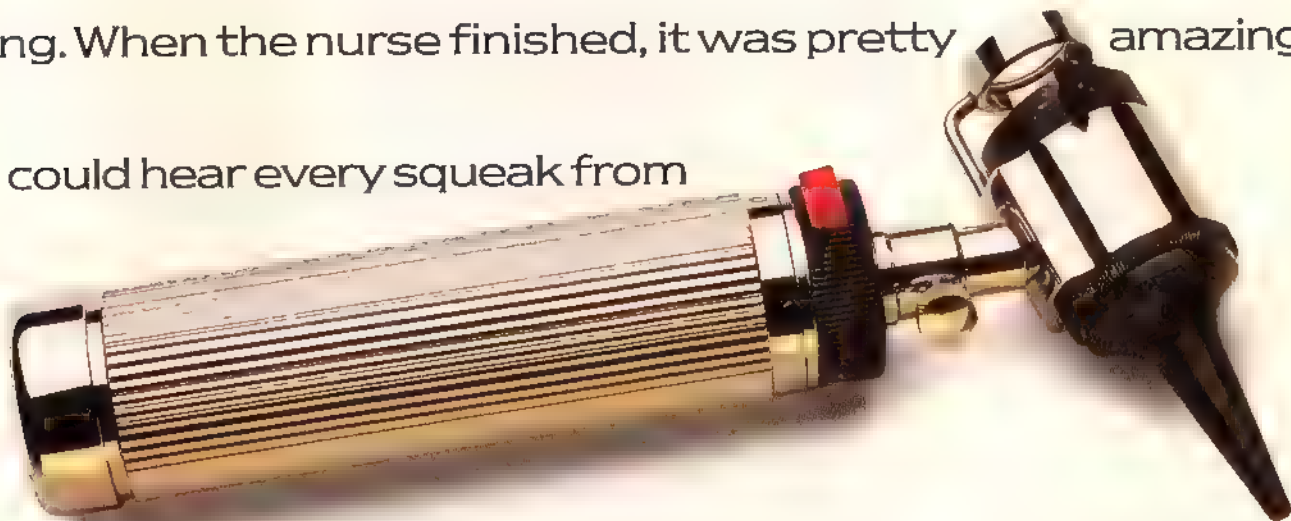
—BARRY WILNER



"I went to see the doctor today. He poked a little. Probed a little. And lectured a lot. Everything was okay

until he came to my ears. Turned out they needed cleaning. When the nurse finished, it was pretty amazing.

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PIONEER
The Art of Entertainment

Has a relief pitcher ever won 20 games in a season? If not, what is the record?

P. K., Kingston, N.Y.

No reliever has managed 20 wins in a year. The record is 18, by Elroy Face of the 1959 Pirates. The AL mark is 17, by John Hiller of Detroit in 1974 and Bill Campbell of Minnesota two years later.

What is the significance of the "U" on the Miami Hurricanes football helmets?

J. P., Lafayette, Ind.

The distinctive "U" was developed by a Miami public relations firm in 1973 after the Canes had gone with a variety of helmets and uniforms. Rather than display a "UM," which also could be worn by many Miami opponents (Missouri, Maryland, and Michigan, for example), designer Bill Bodenheimer suggested the "U," which lent itself to inserting silhouetted athletes in the middle of the design.

In what years did the NCAA first hold championships for basketball, hockey, football, and baseball? Also, when did the NCAA begin overseeing football?

J. L., Milford, N.J.

The first NCAA basketball championship was held in 1939 at Northwestern. The first hockey tournament was held in 1948 in Colorado Springs, while the first baseball championship was held in 1947 at Western Michigan. The NCAA was formed in 1910 to regulate collegiate football competition, but never has had an official football championship.

Was Arlington Stadium built for the Texas Rangers?

C. C., Savannah

No. The stadium was built in 1964 to seat 10,000 for the Dallas-Fort Worth minor league baseball team, the Spurs of the Texas League. It was expanded in 1972 to seat 35,694 for the Rangers and expanded again to 41,284 for the 1978 season and to 43,508 in 1984.



Put your game Face on: The Pirates bullpen ace almost cracked the 20-win barrier.

What happens before a tennis match if one player is late or doesn't want to warm up? Can the other player use someone else to warm up?

D. E., Largo, Fla.

Definitely. If a player will not warm up, then his opponent can use a coach or someone else to perform the duties. There is no penalty to either player for such action.

Who hit more career grand-slam homers, Babe Ruth or Hank Aaron?

T. O., Valdosta, Ga.

The two greatest home run hitters of all time each had 16 grand slams, tied for fifth overall. Lou Gehrig is the leader with 23, and Willie McCovey is next at 18.

Has any team had its entire outfield

drive in more than 100 runs in a season?

C. J., Port Arthur, Texas

It's happened three times. In 1921 the Tigers had left fielder Bobby Veach with 128 RBIs, center fielder Ty Cobb with 101, and right fielder Harry Heilmann with 139. Eight years later the Cubs got 110 from Riggs Stephenson (LF), 159 from Hack Wilson (CF), and 102 from Kiki Cuyler (RF). The 1984 Red Sox had Jim Rice (LF) with 122, Tony Armas (CF) with 123, and Dwight Evans (RF) with 104.

When did the Taiwanese begin dominating the Little League World Series? Are they the only non-Americans to win the championship?

F. F., Wharton, Texas

In 1969 a team from Taipei scored a 5-0 victory over Santa Clara, Calif. Taiwan has had streaks of four and five World Series championships. The first non-American winner was Monterrey, Mexico, which was victorious in 1957 and '58. Other overseas winners have come from Japan and Korea.

I'd like to know when the LPGA began and how many tournaments it had. Also, when was the tour first worth \$1 million, and who was the first woman to win \$1 million in her career?

J. G., Carlsbad, Calif.

The LPGA's annual purses have risen from \$50,000 for 11 events in 1950 to being worth more than \$18 million for a nearly year-round schedule. The first year the tour reached \$1 million in purses was 1973, for 36 events. The first millionaire was Kathy Whitworth, who made it at the 1981 U.S. Open by finishing third and taking home \$9,500. A month later, Donna Caponi and JoAnne Carner joined the club at the Columbia Savings event in Denver. ■

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The Essence of Sports

By BOB RUBIN

ESPN's Jon Miller: A Star In the Theater of the Mind

IT OCCURRED DURING one of the early Sunday night games of 1990, ESPN's rookie season of major league baseball, and it spoke volumes about the difficulties broadcasters face when they don't know each other and each other's styles.

A camera caught a fan making an acrobatic dive for a foul ball in the stands. Backed by a slow-motion replay, analyst Joe Morgan explained in some detail how the fan maneuvered his body to avoid hurting himself. It was offbeat and amusing, and evoked a response in kind from play-by-play man Jon Miller.

"I said, 'Joe, they don't work on that during batting practice, do they?'" Miller says. "Joe hesitated and said, 'Well . . . no.'"

Thud. End of conversation. "I was hoping for a snappy rejoinder or a laugh, but Joe reacted like, 'Is this guy an idiot?'" says Miller, one of the wittiest men in sportscasting and a gifted mimic (more about that later).

As the season went on, Morgan, who is serious by nature, came to understand and appreciate Miller's sense of humor. More importantly, he also realized that Miller is also a rock-solid baseball man. Morgan didn't turn into John Madden, but he did lighten up enough to engage in repartee on appropriate occasions. In fact, by year's end the chemistry between the two men was so much better they wound up winning ACE Awards, cable's version of the Emmy.

Morgan wasn't the only one who had to learn and adjust. "When we started, I was trying to figure out if Joe needed room, if he wanted me to step back and get out of the



Miller's impressions of Scully and Carey are hilarious and, most important, impromptu. 'It's not something you can plan,' he says. 'Sometimes the moment just hits me.'

way, if he wanted me to say things for him to react to—just what he required from me," Miller says. "I didn't know Joe, Joe didn't know me, we didn't know the guys in the truck, the guys in the truck didn't know us, no one knew each other."

"And ESPN was new at doing baseball, so we all had to learn together. I was leery going in because, historically, when a network goes into baseball it struggles. It's going to be compared to NBC, which did [baseball] for 40 years, and it's going to want to put its own stamp on the way the game is covered."

"So, naturally, there were growing pains. There was a lack of cohesion. But I felt we got better as the year went along, and I think we will continue to improve this season."

ESPN made some moves in that direction

during the offseason. Research indicated fans like sophisticated statistics, so ESPN will provide them. Better graphics are another aim, along with the continuation of one of the best features of ESPN's rookie season: numerous cut-ins to other games when something exciting was happening elsewhere. Last year ESPN clocked more than 4,000 switches. This year, it may do even more.

Four broadcasters departed: Jim Palmer, Bob Gibson, and Norm Hitzges, plus play-by-play man Sean McDonough. ESPN lost an estimated \$40 million on baseball last year, and the need to cut back on expenses cost the network the services of Palmer, who refused to accept a drastic pay cut. Too bad. Palmer is very good. On the other hand, few lamented the departure of

Hitzges the Hysterical, whose Vitallian approach to baseball drove purists batty.

New voices in ESPN booths include analysts Jerry Reuss, Billy Sample, and Steve McCatty and play-by-play man Paul Olden. An old voice, nickname maven Chris (Ethel Merman) Berman, will do play-by-play on Tuesday nights and also go back-back-back-back to the studio to host the Sunday night edition of "Baseball Tonight."

Sunday night is the jewel of ESPN's 168-game schedule. First Berman, then the M&M boys, Miller and Morgan. ESPN's game enjoys virtual exclusivity, since few others are played Sunday night, and ESPN treats it like the valuable prime-time property it is.

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game," Miller says. "I was pleased and surprised that it looked good right away. It wasn't sophisticated, but it looked good right away—you saw what you needed to see. As we went along it became more sophisticated. We got inside of plays with slow-motion. I think this year we'll have more and more of that going for us."

Miller also anticipates better teamwork between truck and booth. For one thing, he hopes the truck won't talk to Morgan at the same time he is. "I'd start to say something to Joe and he'd be answering the producer, so I'd have to try to adjust in mid-sentence to make it so Joe wouldn't have to respond," Miller says.

"In football and basketball the producer can have conversation with the analyst during the play because the play-by-play man is describing what's happening. But the pace of baseball is such that conversation can start at any time. They have to be aware of that in the truck."

Something else to be aware of is the danger of falling in love with stats and graphics. "We were overloaded at times last year," Miller says. "They'd worked hard, done their research, come up with all this material—and, by God, they were going to get it in. You need to have the material ready but hope the game is so compelling you don't need to use any of it."

Miller is reasonably confident the rough spots will, in time, be ironed out. "We're all friendly now, no longer suspicious of each other."

Suspicious? That's an odd word to use about members of the same team.

"I think broadcasters tend to think of technical people as their enemies," he says, "especially if the broadcaster is grounded, as I am, in radio."

Ah, baseball on radio, the ultimate challenge and reward in sportscasting. The 39-year-old Miller, one of the best young baseball broadcasters in the business, will do 81 games on radio as the voice of the Baltimore Orioles this year. He's in his ninth season with the club after previous stints with the Oakland A's, Texas Rangers, and Boston Red Sox, and he truly loves his work. Miller waxes lyrical on the subject of baseball on radio.

"On television, you provide captions for pictures; on radio, you paint the pictures," he says. "When you listen to a game on radio, as opposed to watching it on television, it's like reading a novel as opposed to seeing the movie version. I think that in some ways the game can be more vivid

listening to it on radio than watching it on television.

"And, as a broadcaster, you're in total control on radio. Television is so collaborative."

Television also is more of a vehicle for the analyst than the play-by-play man, since it's the whys and hows that are important when people can see what has happened. Miller defers to Morgan and his expertise on

Stadium in St. Louis: "The master painter has painted a Cerulean blue sky around a pewter-gray cloudiness . . ." However, don't get the wrong idea: he does his imitations with respect and affection.

"To me, it's a tribute," Miller says. "You've got to be huge to merit an impression that most recognize immediately. I've done Harry [Caray] for Harry, and he loved it. I've never spoken to Scully about it, but I've been told by others he thinks it's funny."

Miller also does Keith Jackson, Pat Summerall, and Phil Rizzuto, as well as P.A. announcers with distinctive voices, such as Bob Sheppard in New York, Sherm Feller in Boston, and Bob Casey in Minnesota. But Miller is very judicious in his use of imitations. He usually will only do them when a game is one-sided and he feels listeners need to be entertained to stay tuned. And he will do them when he thinks the timing is right, which is something that's felt, not planned.

"They wanted me to do them on TV, and I did a few times, but it really didn't fit in," he says. "We did a Dodgers-Cubs game, and they wanted me to do Caray and Scully coming out of a commercial break. Well, that was fine for them, but not for me. It was totally staged, unspon-taneous and unfunny."

"It's not something you can plan at a morning meeting. There comes a moment that hits me. It's better suited to radio, which is kind of a theater of the mind."

Even when using his own mellifluous voice, Miller can be very funny. "The No. 1 thing about using humor on the air is it has to be you, not a sportscaster persona," he says. "If you're not funny off the mike you shouldn't try to be funny on. If you do have a good sense of humor it's going to come out unless you inhibit it, in which case you're not being yourself, either."

"But humor isn't essential. Dick Enberg isn't a funny man, but he might be the best all-around play-by-play man in the business. You have to start by being journalistically sound, accurate, and knowledgeable, with the inherent ability to do your job professionally. If you don't have that and you just try to be funny, you're just a buffoon."

Jon Miller's funny, but no buffoon. In the theater of the mind that is baseball on radio, he's a star. ■

Like most of us, contributing editor BOB RUBIN enjoys the world of imagination. One of his favorite fantasies has The Mick just missing the drain in the '51 World Series.

"The No. 1 thing about using humor on the air is that it has to be you, not a sportscaster persona. If you're not funny off the mike, you shouldn't try to be funny on." —Jon Miller

ESPN, trying to set him up or draw him out. On radio, though, it's Miller time in Baltimore—or, occasionally, Scully time. Or Caray time. Those two Hall of Fame baseball voices are among those Miller mimics uncannily and hilariously.

He began doing broadcasters' voices as a boy growing up in the San Francisco area. He'd be Russ Hodges, Chuck Thompson, and Vin Scully while playing Strat-O-Matic baseball. The first time Miller used the voices on the air was in 1980, his first season with the Red Sox.

He had entertained Sox announcer Ken Coleman with his imitations on spring training drives around Florida that year. He had no intention of going public with them, though, until a rain delay on Opening Day at Fenway left them high and dry with time to kill on the air. Coleman urged him to trot out of Vin and some others, and Miller reluctantly let fly.

"It's 4 o'clock, drive time, and everyone in New England's listening," he says. "I didn't know what to think. It's my first day on the job, and I figure he must know what he's doing. I'll just grab his hand and grit my teeth."

New England went wild. "The telegrams started pouring in, and there I was on the 11 o'clock news that night doing Vin Scully imitations. I couldn't believe it."

He does Scully in Spanish and Japanese. You'd wet your pants. He repeats one of Scully's more florid lines, one Scully actually used to open a broadcast from Busch

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By EDWARD KIERSH

Bill Parcells

On his style: 'I respect football history. Power wins, always'
On human nature: 'People respond to only one thing: pressure'
On New York Giants fans: 'They find football hard to understand'

HIS GAME PLAN IS QUITE SIMPLE: A no-frills offense, nothing spectacular or fancy, plus DE-FENSE—lots of it, of the in-your-face variety. An admirer of Woody Hayes and Bear Bryant, he favors grind-it-out football, war in the trenches. His is a blue-collar game, where the dominant force controls the ball, the clock, and the degree of pain.

That's Bill Parcells' basic approach, the hypersuccessful philosophy that's brought the New York Giants two Super Bowl victories in five seasons and given taskmaster Parcells, who's frequently seen jawing with his players, "genius" stature in the NFL. Rising to the top by "putting my foot on my players' throats and having them respond," the passionate, ever-purposeful Parcells tolerates few oversized egos. To him, the game is team, team, team. Thus, he's jostled with the media repeatedly, and while amiable among his troops—able to grin during numerous Gatorade dunkings—he's never been too eager to reveal much of himself or detail the "secrets" that have led this team to six double-digit victory seasons, five divisional playoffs, three NFC East crowns, and an overall 77-49 record in his eight years as head coach.

Interviewing Parcells has been rumored to be a daunting task, but in his Meadowlands office (which can more whimsically be called the "Land of the Elephants"), Parcells turns out to be quite a different person. Sitting near his cluttered desk, which is crowded with dozens of miniature elephants (each one with an upturned trunk pointing towards the door for good luck), Parcells talks willingly and wittily. A Giants fan all his life, dressed in a blue Giants sweater and white Giants socks, the 50-year-old, New Jersey-raised Parcells clearly loves his job

—and winning (he's even 27-6 in preseason games). He's so committed, in fact, that he rues leaving the Meadowlands for a vacation. Yet as he impishly suggests, Parcells is itching to try something else. This well could be his last season in coaching. And while his next endeavor remains undetermined, one thing is for certain. That herd of elephants will lead the way.

INSIDE SPORTS: How is winning this second Super Bowl different than in 1986?

BILL PARCELLS: The first time I was just wondering if I'd ever have the chance to be in such a game. When you win it's a tremendous satisfaction; you've reached a pinnacle, you're the king of the hill. Then your mentality changes. It switches to the Super Bowl becoming the only reason you're in coaching. You feel you have to duplicate it, win that game again. It's not a case of trying to show the first victory wasn't a fluke, but when you don't get to the game again, you feel a lot more critical of yourself, even if you've done a good job that year. I'm hard on myself all the time, too hard. I feel like a failure when I don't get to the Super Bowl.

IS: Is this because America demands a winner?

BP: I think society reflects that "No. 1" syndrome. No one supports underdogs anymore, and that's bad. Everyone wants to be connected to a winner, the top dog. There's a great competitiveness out there between everyone.

IS: Did you feel during the season that the team could go all the way? If so, why?

BP: Even with our good start, I knew the Giants would go through some rough times. We did, and we didn't survive them all that well. But we had enough behind us that we never faced any great pressure. We never had our backs against the wall.

Sure, when Simms went down we felt a little apprehension, but I could sense that once we got in the playoffs we'd be OK. Our team has this underdog mentality; we flourish amidst that feeling. Philly, Buffalo, the Raiders, and San Francisco were certainly getting all the attention, but I didn't feel any of them was superior to us. I told my guys we could beat any one of those teams, and to some degree that got them going. I really knew we could make a strong run.

IS: How important is that encouragement to increasing motivation in the NFL?

BP: A coach has to be very careful, because everything everyone else is doing is geared to pulling your team apart: The media, the players' agents, the players' families when they say, "You should be playing more. You should be getting the ball more." In this business, I fight three things *every day*: Division from within, our opponents, and the media—especially the media, because if I'm not vigilant the players will start to believe what's written about them. We don't have time for egos on the Giants.

IS: You sound like you could be very demanding and tough at times.

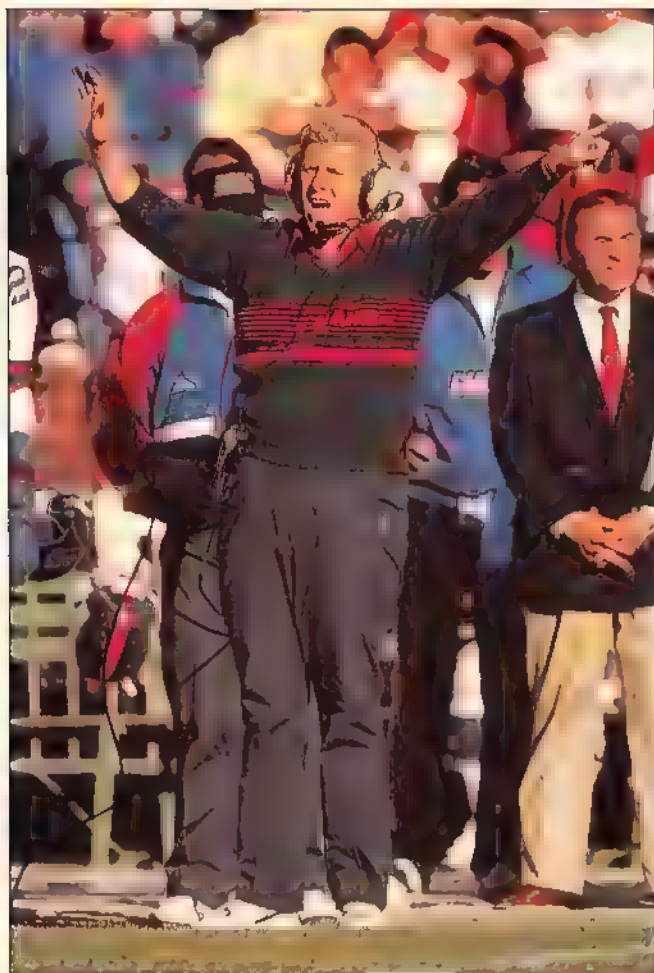
BP: I am. I am. If I wasn't I'd be gone from this business, very quickly.

IS: You're still viewed as a "players' coach."

BP: Forget that players' coach stuff. I don't buy it. It's just my personality to have strong relationships with these guys. How could I not? I'm with them six months a year. I have to be honest and straightforward with them. From time to time, telling them what I think creates a problem or an argument. But after a while a player gets to understand me, [that] I want the player to succeed. That's in my best interest. The question is, though, Can we both get on the same page?

IS: Are you on the same page with Rodney





'All plays go through me. We're not calling them by committee.'

Hampton? Some of your critics say you bring along rookies a little too slowly, that you're too conservative.

IS: I don't think I'm conservative. I don't think anyone, including the media, really knows what players can do, what their true capabilities are.

As for Hampton, I don't agree I've brought him along too slowly. The media scrutiny in New York, the "Macy's window" thing that these athletes are in—people see one play, one 90-yard run in preseason, and right away the player is termed a savior. They don't see a lot of the learning situations a player must go through, the failures that are only natural to a youngster when he's adjusting. The fans just want to see more 90-yard runs. I'm not, however, going to throw a kid to the wolves. That could destroy him. He may fail at so many things he could be run out of football.

IS: So if "slowly" is an inappropriate word, what about "cautiously"?

BP: I'm convinced the guy should function at his position, and in Rodney's case that means functioning equally in running, blocking, and catching. If he is going to be a full time player, which he may be someday,

Mike Ditka is reported to have said that he "guarantees" beating the Giants next year. Was this sour grapes?

BP: Nah. I didn't hear that. I like Mike Ditka a lot. That just doesn't sound like Mike Ditka to me. I don't believe he said something like that.

IS: He also supposedly said that the Bears would have won if Simms was at quarterback.

BP: I didn't hear him say that. I hope he didn't.

IS: A lot of people felt your Super Bowl victory was an upset. Would you agree?

BP: I don't care what they've called it. I don't think it was an upset. I told the team right from the beginning they could win.

IS: What was your exact message to the team Super Bowl week?

BP: My message to the team is usually the same. I often tell them we're going to play extra-aggressive, that we're going to go right for their throat. We're going to take some chances. At times that approach isn't used, but it must be utilized against clubs that have certain strengths, an ego about their team. They feel they can do certain things, and I want to prevent them from doing that.

A team might not be able to stand up to you physically over a long period of time.

Take the Bills, for example. We didn't feel they could stand up to us defensively, but we felt our offensive group was a mismatch physically. We knew their offense was going to be difficult to stop, and if they were out there too much, they'd score more than we would. So we took our resource, which is power, and that neutralized their defense and offense. Power wins, always.

IS: What does power really mean? Is it at the heart of your preference for big linebackers and linemen?

BP: Size and strength are part of power, provided the players are well-conditioned. I wouldn't say we have "fast power," but we can wear guys down. We can be physically dominant. I felt we definitely could against Buffalo. But I had to sell this belief to my guys, and they did buy it. We had to keep the ball. The first meeting we had in Tampa, I said: "Fellas, do you want to win this thing? Then we have to keep the ball forever. That's what you got to do." We won because our guys recognized this right away.

IS: Why do you believe so strongly in power football?

BP: I have a great respect for the history of this game. I'm not saying this egotistically, but I've taken the time to study my predecessors, those guys who were coaching in the 1940s and '50s. I've looked at the advent of defenses and offenses: Bud Wilkinson with the speed, the monster defense at Arkansas, and the Woody Hayes approach. I've looked at all these factors, and you see a common denominator that's linked all these coaches together: being able to run the ball off-tackle for five yards any time you want to. If you can you're going to win a lot of games.

IS: Who has influenced your coaching style?

BP: My heroes are Bear Bryant, Woody Hayes. I've looked at them a lot. Bo Schembechler. I just like the way they operated. They were leaders, determined. They were always up there; their teams were always well prepared. They weren't the flashiest of coaches, but they were in there. I also have a great deal of respect for Al Davis. Al's been very helpful to me. I certainly think he's one of the most knowledgeable guys in the sport.

IS: When it comes to motivating players, do you have a role model?

BP: If I do, it goes back to my high school basketball coach, Mickey Cochrane. He's 70 years old now, and he comes to a lot of our games. The only thing he talks about is winning. My fondest memory of him concerns our playing the Bears in 1985. At that time they were the best team I had seen defensively. We lost to them in a game that was very close at the half. We missed a few field goals, dropped a few passes, but physically they were just better than us.

Well, after we lost—and this was the second year in a row that we went down in the second round—I was really pissed. Not at anybody in particular, but at the whole situation. It was 10 degrees on the sidelines, and I'm standing there thinking about another offseason, another draft, another regular season just to get back to the second round again. I was very upset, and after the game I didn't talk to anyone. I was blowing the press off, and I didn't even say anything to Mickey on the plane ride home. Finally, though, he says to me, "You've got to figure out a way to beat those ---- guys." He didn't say, "Nice going, you accomplished a lot." He just wanted me to figure out a way to win, and that made me stop feeling sorry for myself. I remembered that when we approached the planning for Buffalo. I had to figure out a way.

IS: When you're in this planning mode, who calls the offensive plays, you or Ron Erhardt?

BP: Every play goes through me. We're not calling them by committee. I think my job as coach is to give the team a good design and to oversee the plan. Ideas from the coaches are also incorporated, but the most important thing I do as a coach is to manage the game. The key decisions—punting, coverage on defenses, do we try to block a kick—that's all under my jurisdiction.

IS: Who called for the fake punt in the playoff game against the 49ers?

BP: I did. Gary [Reasons] had been alerted we wanted to run that play, and I told him to look for an opportunity. We had looked at the play two or three times earlier in the game. We just had to pick a spot. Gary told me it was there at the end of the first half, that we just had to make an adjustment in the blocking. So the time came up, but they only had 10 guys on the field. I'm not a genius.

IS: Was any effort made to keep Bill Belichick?

BP: It would've been a futile one. You only get so many opportunities. You've got to take the shot when you can—look at Floyd Peters. He was a very hot commodity as a defensive coordinator before his team went downhill. You've got to make hay while the sun shines.

IS: How will losing several assistant coaches affect the team this year?

BP: Well, that's a real good question. I don't know if I have the answer. There are evolutions that take place in this business. There is attrition. This is my 10th year in New York, two years as assistant and eight as head coach, and there's only one coach who's been with me the whole time [Erhardt]. So there's already been a lot of transition.

IS: Will the adjustment be an easy one for you and the team?

BP: No. No way. But I do think it can be done. We have enough ingredients in place, enough carryover, enough leadership, enough capability. I'll miss those guys, and I wish they were here, but they're not. We'll just have to make do.

IS: What about Hostetler? Did his performance surprise you?

BP: [A long pause, as Parcells puffs thoughtfully on a cigarette.] To a degree. Not in capability level, but in the decision-making process, the mental aspect of the game. He's a very bright kid. I knew he'd know what to do. Yet there's always a question of whether he could do it under pressure.

IS: His sheer gutsiness surprised a lot of people.

BP: That's true. He kept coming back and back. You always have some apprehension, because I only have confidence after I see demonstrated ability. Fortunately, we had enough time where we could experiment with him and get some feedback from him. I think he felt good as we evolved into the

Does the young guy take over now? I don't know. But this is a good problem for a coach to have.

IS: Did you change the defense to adjust to Lawrence Taylor's new reduced capabilities?

BP: Not really [his voice is a bit harsh now]. We did things in the playoffs that we've been doing for three to four years, and everyone reacted like we were doing it for the first time. We had a two-man line in 1988.

IS: Do you feel he's less of a defensive threat?

BP: Sure. Lawrence will tell you that. From what he once was, sure. Hey, this guy was unbelievable. He gets beat up, he gets hurt, he gets sore. He can't sustain it at the level he used to be at. He has to pick his spots. But he's still a good player.

IS: Has Bruce Smith replaced LT at the top of the heap? Or is Smith just a lot of talk?

BP: I don't think he's replaced him. [Smith's] a good player, and not that big a mouth. But [in Taylor] you're talking about the best guy who ever played the position.



playoffs. We just did things that gave him the best chance to succeed.

IS: Will it be Simms or Hostetler in '91?

BP: The fans and media love this kind of stuff. I only have one choice; I can only go by what I see. I can't envision the future. It's open right now. I know what Simms can do. The only question is, Have his skills deteriorated? And Jeff is definitely on the upswing.

An enigma: A disciplinarian who's also known as a players' coach.

And this isn't negative about Smith. Maybe he'll eventually be that way. I respect him because he plays hard. But Lawrence is the best guy who ever played. We're not talking about the same kind of animal here. Ten Pro Bowls, two championships, the all-time sack

leader. Plus, don't forget—he's the all-time leader playing linebacker. LT is just different than the rest of them.

IS: During your 10-year association with the Giants, does Taylor stand out as your favorite player?

BP: Only him and Phil [Simms] have been with me through all my years here. I've been very fortunate to have them. First of all, they're close friends, and second, all three of us have similar personalities. That's not always amiable—we're all stubborn, we all have minds of our own. But the best thing is that we're all team guys. I want a team, not superstars. Those guys are superstars, but they're probably the most team-oriented guys I've got. That's helped me subordinate the egos of the others around here. I haven't had too many egos, because those two guys have put them right in their place.

IS: Which player could you least afford to lose?

BP: I don't know. They're all valuable to me.

IS: You're also friendly with Buddy Ryan. Did his firing surprise you?

BP: Nothing surprises me, not anymore. He did a good job, yet he did it in his own way. I'm respectful of what he accomplished. Once in a while he said something that I didn't have any problem with, but gee, maybe he shouldn't have said it. He had a philosophy, and he put it in place. He got results. I respect that.

IS: Did you get any special satisfaction from Ottis Anderson's performance after you decided to keep him and let Joe Morris go?

BP: Not really. I don't feel I have to vindicate myself. Joe once put his blood out there for us.

IS: What about your coaching philosophy? Has it changed over the years? For that matter, have you?

BP: It hasn't changed that much, but I spend a lot less time worrying about things. I have a better idea of what's important in pro football than I did my first few years. Instead of thinking about such matters as acquisition of personnel, team conditioning, role-playing, I just make sure they're all in place. I'm not worrying. I'm doing.

IS: Your first year was very rough. The team was 3-12-1. Both of your parents died within a six-week span. Your backfield coach, Bob Ledbetter, died; so did running back Doug Kotar. How did you survive emotionally?

BP: Not all that well. It was very tough. It came down to saying to myself, "Is someone trying to get me?"

IS: How did you get through this period?

BP: My best friend in football, Dan Henning of the Chargers, spoke to me. He said of course my job was in jeopardy, and he knew what I was going through. But one day he says to me, "What's the worst thing that

can happen to you now? Do you get fired?" I said yeah, and that would be pretty bad. Well, he told me not to worry about that, since he'd give me a job. His comments put it all in perspective. There were just some things I couldn't worry about.

But the experience did toughen me. It made me more determined. Once I knew I was going to get another experience, I told myself I was going to do everything my way. That made me more aggressive and vocal. Only later did I learn to temper it down.

IS: So those misfortunes were liberating for you?

BP: I think there's only one thing people respond to, and that's pressure. The pressure was certainly on. I knew I had to get things done very quickly.

IS: Pressure. That seems to be a key motivational tool for you.



King of the hill: 'We don't have time for egos on the Giants.'

BP: Pressure can certainly be a key to how I deal with some players. Oh yeah, definitely.

IS: What are the pluses and minuses to coaching in New York?

BP: [He laughs.] I grew up here, so I'm comfortable in this environment. I was a Giants fan when I was a kid.

IS: Is that attachment a plus?

BP: No. The novelty of that wore off very quickly. I'm not enamored with being the coach of the Giants anymore. It's a job. I'm glad to have it, it's been a good job for me, I've enjoyed it. And I've been very fortunate to be with this organization that has been supportive, committed. I think I've been part of that, in directing the way the team goes. We have great owners, a great GM—and let me tell you, not all coaches have that. Some guys have bad ownership, bad leadership. I haven't had that. My input has been valuable here. My personnel department understands what I want, and they try to get it for me.

IS: How about the celebrity that's attached to winning in New York? Is that a plus?

BP: Not at all. That's a personal thing, and I'm not into that. I want to win because of the satisfaction that comes from winning. I enjoy the competition.

IS: What are the negatives?

BP: About New York? I think there's a tremendous amount of sophistication in New York when it comes to certain sports, but football is not one of them. Fans simply find it hard to understand the game. They think they're sophisticated about it, but that only exasperates me. I don't want to use the word "ignorant," but there is indeed some stupidity out there. Even in the media.

IS: Some members of the media think you're manipulative, hard to get along with.

BP: I might agree with that. I'm manipulative at times. I have to use every tool that's available to me; [the media are] a way to disseminate information. I still don't feel I have the right to lie to the media, and I don't. Basically I try to be pretty straightforward. I also try to be accessible. That is a problem at times.

IS: Do you generally like the media?

BP: Let's say I like some of the people in it.

IS: You've talked about personnel. How do you and [Giants general manager] George Young resolve differences over draft choices?

BP: We seldom have those differences. He knows what I'm looking for. I know his priorities. Sometimes I want something a little different in a different area. It usually revolves around different areas, not which player is better. When we disagree, I'll usually prefer to have a certain position because I feel a greater need there. But I have to be very careful. You can get run out of football by drafting for needs all the time. There will always be more needs than talent available.

George and his people are just trying to get good players, and I respect that. We work out our differences in a give-and-take manner. There have been times where we were very argumentative, and sometimes he's prevailed. I'm glad he did. And they're glad that sometimes I won out.

IS: What are you mainly looking for in a draft choice?

BP: Character, and enough brainpower so I can get to this guy.

IS: Is bigger better in pro football?

BP: I think it's headed that way. And I guess I have this preference for bigger defensive players because I don't want to be overpowered. I'm just trying to keep pace.

IS: What are your strengths as a coach?

BP: I have a philosophy. I know what I'm looking for in a player and in my team's performance. I also think my experience is now a big asset.

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IS: What are your personal weaknesses?

BP: Maybe I get too emotionally tied to people. I'm also not satisfied, no matter how well the team is doing. I'm too demanding at times. I'd say my not being able to step back from the game well enough in the offseason is a definite shortcoming. I just can't relax.

IS: You insist on coming to the office?

BP: I haven't taken a day off since July of 1990. If I have a weakness, it's not being able to separate things well enough.

IS: How many more years do you want to coach?

BP: I don't know. I'm just coaching from year to year now.

IS: So this could end at any time now?

BP: Absolutely.

IS: Do you have any idea what you'd like to do?

BP: No. I have no plans, none whatsoever.

IS: Would you like to get into the business world?

BP: No. Not business, no. I have no real game plan. Fortunately I have no pressures financially. I can survive.

IS: Would you want to take a few years off?

BP: Not really. I might like to stay in the game somehow. I love the sport; it's been with me all my life.

IS: As a general manager?

BP: No way! It's a thankless job. If I wasn't coaching I might want to be involved with personnel, or maybe the media. I'd like to stay around.

IS: How do you regard George Young as a GM?

BP: He's conservative, and I feel that's a plus. I don't think he's impulsive at all, and that too is a plus. That's a good restraint on me, because I can be impulsive. Things can become very urgent to me. George—he's been very supportive to me.

IS: You sound appreciative of having him in the same organization.

BP: Definitely. George doesn't try to coach, and there are GMs who do. He's a general manager; he lets me coach, and I do appreciate that.

IS: What about your relationship with the Maras? Did their feuding affect you or the team?

BP: Not at all. Never. It never got to me, it never got that far. George Young was the buffer.

IS: Are you as close to Tim as you are to Wellington Mara?

BP: Not exactly. I know Tim a little better, but both men have been very supportive of me. Nothing negative has ever happened between me and either man.

IS: On a totally different front, how come you've never done a Gatorade commercial?

BP: No one has ever asked me to do one. I'm not big on the outside stuff.

IS: Perhaps, but you're doing an ad for MCI.

BP: That was only a one-day deal. I've done very little of that kind of stuff. My father taught me that Madison Avenue was the quickest exit out of New York. He told me, "Stay away."

IS: You're very superstitious. Where does that come from?

BP: My mom was very superstitious. She was Italian.

IS: What's your favorite superstition?

BP: You see all these elephants here? Having their trunks pointing up is good luck. I'd never have an elephant with his trunk pointing down.

I don't know, I guess all this stuff is a habit. I like to do things the same all the time. I practice my blitz pickups on the 25-yard line all the time. My players know that, and if we should be doing it on the 30-yard line, they remind me. I always sit at the same place on the plane. And of course my players are superstitious too, and they use my superstitions against me, like "We didn't run last Wednesday, so why do we have to run this Wednesday?" If you've noticed, LT will always be standing on my left during the national anthem. He's been there for 10 years. If he's not there I don't have to say anything. He'll run there.

IS: It sounds like this stuff gets a little crazy at times.

BP: [He chuckles and smiles.] Maybe.

IS: The Giants are 27-6 in preseason games with you as a coach—

BP: We try to win every, and I mean every game. That's my philosophy. No matter what the game is, I want to win. But not at all costs. Not at the expense of abusing people. I do want to win every game, because the more you win, the better it is. Players get used to winning. I've been involved in sports since I'm five years old, and competition is what it's all about. Winning is the barometer.

IS: You're in select company. Noll, Gibbs, Shula, Lombardi, and Walsh are the coaches to have won more than one Super Bowl. How does this make you feel?

BP: Quite honestly, it doesn't mean a hell of a lot. Sure I'm grateful, but it's a different era, a different time. I've been lucky.

IS: Are you happy? I know you have to go, but are you feeling good?

BP: You know, there's no respite in this business. It's just move on to the next thing. What have you done for me lately? You just watch the first preseason game this year. See what happens. I know what will happen: Everyone involved wants us to win, or else. This is a tough business. A very tough business.

EDWARD KIERSH works in a pretty tough business himself: talking to successful, intelligent people about what makes them tick. Ed's interview with Clyde Drexler ran in May.



HOT Questions

Phil In the Blank

We kick off our special section with the hottest question in the Big Apple: Will Phil Simms or Jeff Hostetler lead the Giants?

By GREG GARBER



BILL PARCELLS SQUINTED into the glare of the press conference lights, and the muscles in his jaw started working. It was the morning after the night the Giants had achieved a truly superb victory in Super Bowl XXV, the most dramatic in the game's history, scraping past the Buffalo Bills 20-19 at Tampa Stadium. The Giants coach, who hadn't slept since clinching the team's second Super Bowl title in five seasons, was still basking in the afterglow when the inevitable question came winging out of the crowd of reporters: "How are you going to handle

your quarterback controversy next season?"

Parcells grimaced. "I've got two pretty good quarterbacks," he said. "That's not a controversy. I'll go by what I see. That doesn't mean the quarterback's job is wide open. I'll make that announcement at the start of training camp. We'll see what happens."

Indeed we will. In this corner, it's Phil Simms, the 12-year veteran and incumbent starter, who happened to lead the National Football Conference in passer rating last year. He was the most valuable player in Super Bowl XXI with a record-breaking

game. In the other corner, it's Jeff Hostetler, five years younger and a few steps faster. After Simms went down in Game 14 of 1990, the Giants won their last five games of the season with Hostetler. He might have been the MVP of Super Bowl XXV if teammate Ottis Anderson hadn't (barely) cleared 100 yards.

The prediction here is that Simms, who will turn 36 this season, will answer the bell one more time and win the starting job. If Kansas City's Steve DeBerg can do it at age 36, how hard can it be for Simms? His injury, which he says is a broken foot despite reports that it was only a sprain, took longer to heal than originally expected, but Simms has overcome serious injuries before.

Suffice it to say, this is a unique situation. Never before has a National Football League coach faced a quarterback dilemma of this magnitude. Never before have two quarterbacks who each have won a Super Bowl for the same team been forced to face off in a training camp showdown for the starting job. This story will feed the metropolitan-area radio call-in show monster for the next six months.

It's an emotional subject, one colored by the classic arguments of age vs. youth and mobility vs. guile and complicated by the performance level of the two combatants. Last season Simms proved that an old dog could learn new tricks; he threw only four interceptions in 311 passing attempts, and his record as a starter was 11-3. Hostetler, for his part, played remarkably well for a guy who previously had started only two games. He showed a surprising touch for a quarterback who was seen as little more than a scrambler, and it's hard to argue with his results: The Giants are 7-0 in games Hostetler has started in his seven-year career.

Some observers suggest the Giants will platoon Simms and Hostetler. The idea would be to use the more nimble Hostetler against teams with a ferocious pass rush, such as Philadelphia or Washington. But historically, platooning has never worked. Plus, the Giants offensive linemen say it took them several games to adjust to Hostetler's signal-calling cadence and rambling style. "With Phil, you just held your block for three counts and the ball was gone or he was sacked," says one. "With Jeff, you get to the three count, look up, and he's coming your way. You have to really be aware, because you might have to take your guy out. It was a whole different deal."

Simms knows the day is coming when he will stand on the sidelines and watch Hostetler play ahead of him. He's just not sure



Hostetler's play put the sidelined Simms on shaky footing.

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Hostetler impressed Parcells with his gutsy decision-making.

that time has come yet. "I can play football," he says, "and I'm still pretty good at it. There's no way there can be two No. 1 quarterbacks. There has to be a distinction, or you get into trouble."

After the Giants' disastrous 6-9 (actually, 6-6 counting only the union-made games) attempt to repeat as NFL champions in 1987, many will be watching the team closely in 1991. How Parcells handles the quarterback situation—and, specifically, the loser in the battle—will go a long way toward determining the Giants' collective attitude. Says Simms: "I guess if I was a coach I wouldn't look at it as a problem. That doesn't mean I think it's easy. In a way, if it is handled wrong, a quarterback controversy can disrupt a team."

In a curious way, both quarterbacks have been forced to develop their powers of patience over the years. Simms essentially missed the 1982 and 1983 seasons with debilitating knee and thumb injuries and watched Scott Brunner preside over a team that won seven of 25 games. Hostetler has been a career back-up; when Simms was hurt, Hostetler's own wife, Vicky, conceded

that her husband probably would not become the full-time starter until Simms left the team.

In many ways, 1990 was Simms' best season. His passer rating of 92.7 was the highest of his career. It was a result of a new philosophy aimed at eliminating the kind of mistakes he had become (in)famous for: Simms finally learned to unload the ball under duress. In the championship season of 1986, Simms was sacked 45 times and threw a staggering 22 interceptions. That was one major mistake for every seven passes. In 1990 Simms was sacked 20 times and threw only four interceptions; the mistake ratio was reduced to one for every 13 passes.

"I take a lot more pride in that than I used to," Simms says. "Let's be real . . . Those [offensive line] guys, they muttered under their breath how much they ——— hated me in years past for holding on to the ball. But I thought nothing of it. I thought, 'Who's worried about what the sack total says?' I hate to say I never played smart before, but I think it's a little change in belief."

Simms' injury forced him to miss more than a month on the golf courses in Florida, but he hopes to be ready to go full speed in training camp. Still, questions about his health are valid. Simms now has suffered serious foot and ankle injuries the last two seasons.

On the other hand, after Simms went down, Hostetler produced the following results:

- The Giants won the five games he started.
- Hostetler threw 138 passes and completed 79 (for a percentage of 57.2) for 920 yards and five touchdowns. He did not throw an interception.
- He also ran 39 times for 200 yards and two more touchdowns. In the opening play-off game against the Chicago Bears, each of Hostetler's six runs resulted in a first down. Two runs came on fourth down, three on third down, and the other was a first-and-goal touchdown.

And through it all, Hostetler refused to be paralyzed by the spotlight. "No," he told the media multitudes at the Super Bowl, "I don't liken it in any way to a dream. I've always believed I could play, and now I'm just getting the chance to play and prove myself." Says Parcells: "What surprised me was how consistent he was so quickly. No turnovers. No bad decisions. He certainly answered any questions anyone might have."

And raised a few more. The perception is that offensive coordinator Ron Erhardt will have a difficult time designing an offense when he isn't certain who will be running it. Not so. Giants coaches say they didn't add anything to the playbook when Simms got

hurt; they merely used more designed bootlegs to take advantage of Hostetler's running ability.

"I don't think it will be that hard," says offensive line coach Fred Hoaglin. "We have a sound offensive plan. Besides, both those guys are mature, both are team guys. They'll both work real hard to do their jobs right, and a decision will be made."

Anderson thinks he knows how it will go. In 1989, when he and Joe Morris battled for the starting running back's job, Parcells used Morris with the first team in morning practices and Anderson with the front-line unit in the afternoon. "I could see Bill doing that," Anderson says. "Then he'll give them equal time with the first team in the exhibition games. Bill is not going to have a controversy, but he'll take his time deciding."

"Bill loves to hold that ace in the hole. He thrives on that, keeping everybody guessing. That's what he does best."

And who will have a tougher time dealing with the bench? "Phil," Anderson says without hesitation, "because he's been the starter ever since he's been here. He's used to that star billing. It would be easier for Hoss to deal with it than Phil. He's got to remember, he only got that job because Phil got hurt."

True, and the Giants won't be paying Hostetler \$1.4 million in 1991, either. Clearly, it is Simms' job to lose. If he can prove that his vulnerable feet and ankles can stand up to the wear and tear of training camp—and if Hostetler doesn't pass the lights out—Simms is the starter.

In either case, it's obvious that both quarterbacks will see playing time. In the rough-and-tumble NFL, only three quarterbacks—Miami's Dan Marino, Philadelphia's Randall Cunningham, and Jim Everett of the Los Angeles Rams—started every game in each of the last three seasons. Last year Parcells talked about working Hostetler into the game when certain situations arose. Before Simms was injured, Hostetler already had appeared in four games. And if Hostetler is the starter, his style is not conducive to longevity. Either of the big hits he suffered in the playoffs, from San Francisco's Jim Burt and Buffalo's Leon Seals, probably would have knocked him out of a regular-season game.

Does Simms think he can win the job?

"To be honest with you," says Simms, "I don't know why I have to prove anything. I'm trying not to worry about it, because there's nothing I can do about it. Whatever happens will happen." ■

One thing there's no question about: GREG GARBNER knows football. Greg observed back in January that the single week before the Super Bowl favored the underdog.



AFC EAST

Buffalo Bills

Can the Bills rebound emotionally from Super Bowl XXV?

Absolutely. No question the Bills were devastated when Scott Norwood's 47-yard field goal sailed wide right at the end of their 20-19 loss to the Giants, but the healing process began the very next day. About 25,000 fans showed up at Buffalo's City Hall to greet their conquered heroes. A chant of "We Want Scott!" was deafening, bringing Norwood to tears. Since then, the Bills have forwarded more than 300 letters of support to Norwood.

As for the rest of the Bills, the arrogance and cockiness they carried into the Super Bowl hasn't dissipated. Fresh off their 51-3 dismantling of the Raiders in the AFC

Championship Game, they thought the Super Bowl trophy was a given. They strutted their way through Super Bowl week, never even pausing to consider the possibility of defeat. The loss certainly brought the Bills back down to earth, but only temporarily. They still consider themselves the team of the '90s, still don't see anyone in the AFC who can match them. If anything, the Bills will set out to prove that the Super Bowl was a fluke.

The Bills were spared the usual hangover most Super Bowl champs seem to carry into the next season. No, the Bills need not fear being unable to recover emotionally. Their concern will be overconfidence.

Are the Bills physical enough on defense?

No. Buffalo's defense relies too much on the offense taking an early lead. That enables Bruce Smith to tee off on the pass rush, and covers up the run-defense deficiencies.

Is Bennett one of the most overrated players in football? Definitely. Bennett has never lived up to the price Buffalo paid for him in '87—two No. 1s, a No. 2, and Greg Bell.

—PAUL NEEDELL

The Dolphins run more now, but Marino's arm is always ready.

Miami Dolphins

Have we seen the last of Dan Marino's gunslinging days?

Not quite. Sure, Don Shula pulled the reins in on Marino a little bit last season, trying to run more of a balanced power attack like the monsters in the NFC East. But while Sammie Smith did come through with 831 rushing yards and eight touchdowns, when push comes to shove the Dolphins still rely primarily on Marino's rocket-launcher.

However, we most certainly have seen the last of Marino's seasons of 40-plus touchdown passes. His 531 pass attempts in 1990 were a career low for a 16-game season, as were his 3,563 yards and 21 touchdowns. But then again, Marino was intercepted only 11 times, another career

low. And it's not as if Miami suddenly turned into three-yards-and-a-cloud-of-dust last year. Only two quarterbacks, Warren Moon (584) and Jim Everett (554), attempted more passes than Marino.

However, Shula is serious about building a formidable running game around Smith and last year's sterling rookie offensive linemen, Richmond Webb and Keith Sims. He knows Marino's pistol is loaded whenever he needs it, but he also knows one-dimensional offenses can be exciting but also self-destructive. Come playoff time, too much cold, wind, rain, or snow can turn Marino's .357 Magnum into a water pistol. When that happens, the Dolphins are dead—unless Shula stays on his present course.

Has a rookie tackle ever performed better than Webb? Uh-uh. Only Anthony Munoz in 1980 can even compare to the stability and protection Webb offered Marino from the critical left tackle spot.

Is the Miami defense really topnotch yet? No way. Almost every top team the Fish played last year controlled the ball against them and scored at will. —P.N.

Indianapolis Colts Is Jeff George a wimp or the real deal?

It's time to put those "Jeff George should wear a skirt" accusations to bed, folks. Sure, even the Colts had trouble hiding their disdain when an abdominal strain kept him out of three games early last season, but the rookie quarterback picked himself up off the floor to lead Indy to a 5-3 record in the second half. His first-year numbers were terrific: 181-for-334, 2,152 yards, and 16 touchdowns with just 13 interceptions. And he successfully transformed the Colts from Eric Dickerson's team to his team. The amazing thing is that the local product actually had to win over the hometown fans, who were among those who bought into his wimpy reputation.

Old images die hard, you see. And what people in Indianapolis remember best about George is a back injury he sustained during his freshman year at Purdue. The picture frozen in everyone's mind is that of George being carted off the field, with his mother walking along at his side.

Ouch. Football players, even 18-year-old football players, are not supposed to need their mommies. But George's rifle arm,



George took the hits and showed he's more than a big paycheck.

ability to move in the pocket and see the field, and yes, his toughness behind a Swiss-cheese offensive line won over fans and teammates alike by season's end.

Drop the wimp tag. What we're seeing here is a future Pro Bowler in the making.

Will Eric Dickerson clean up his act? He'd be better. Since he'll be 31 at the start of this season, he'd be smart to learn to say hello before it's time to say goodbye.

How did Ron Meyer get himself a brand-new contract? The Colts finished strongly, and the sweet-talking Meyer is very popular in Indianapolis. Add it up, and you suddenly have a very secure coach. —P.N.

New York Jets Is there enough room in New York for Bruce Coslet and the media?

It didn't seem so last season. Coslet, replacing the stoic and painfully dull Joe Walton, should have had the New York press corps eating out of the palm of his hand. But he cut the honeymoon short, frequently challenging and demeaning inquiring minds asking even the most innocent of questions.

Coslet also displayed an alarming tendency to twist the truth at his convenience. This wouldn't be so terrible if he had been careful enough not to get caught. However, when he tried to explain a silly 12-yard punt by placekicker Pat Leahy out of field goal formation by saying he wanted to keep Cleveland punt returner Eric Metcalf off the field, it was pretty hard to swallow for one very good reason: Metcalf, a wonderful

kickoff returner, has never fielded an NFL punt.

There were a handful of other examples in which Coslet failed to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But by far his biggest *faux pas* regarding the media came the day after the Jets' Monday night loss to the Bills. Instead of meeting with the media face-to-face in the press room at the team's training facility, Coslet chose to conduct the inter-

view by telephone hookup, claiming he didn't have a minute to spare with a short week to prepare for the next game. So while a dozen New York reporters huddled around a speaker-phone, Coslet sat upstairs in his office in the same building.

Can this strained relationship be salvaged? Sure, if one of two things happen: Coslet, who is engaging and charming when he wants to be, makes a conscious effort to lighten up a little bit. Or he turns the 6-10 Jets, who haven't won a division title since 1969, into a contender. If Coslet wins, he'll no longer be considered a pain in the neck. He'll turn into a colorful personality.

Do Coslet and GM Dick Steinberg really believe they can win with Ken O'Brien? No. All indications suggest O'Brien is just keeping the QB spot warm for Troy Taylor.

Will Erik McMillan recapture his Pro Bowl form? Only if he works at it. Privately, the Jets agree that McMillan was exposed as a poor tackler last year, and the big plays of his first two years vanished. —P.N.

New England Patriots Can Victor Kiam keep his feet out of his mouth?

Doubtful. Kiam turned into the owner that roared last season, first by initially shrugging off the Lisa Olson incident as a "fleshy speck in the ocean," and later by telling an off-color joke involving Ms. Olson and Patriot missiles during Operation Desert Storm. Apparently the \$25,000 fine NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue levied against the Patriots for their bungling of the Olson affair wasn't enough of a detriment for the Remington Razor man. Has an NFL owner ever had his mouth washed out with soap?

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HOT Questions

Even regarding on-the-field matters, Kiam can't keep quiet. As the season ended he turned over club operations to Sam Jankovich, the former athletic director at the University of Miami. Jankovich and new coach Dick MacPherson have spent much of the offseason trying to work up support in New England for the ailing franchise. They've hosted cocktail parties for bigwigs, addressed men's clubs, and done just about everything they can from a PR standpoint to convince the locals the Patriots are worth keeping. So what does ol' Victor do in the middle of all this? He admits going to Baltimore to speak to folks about the possibility of moving the Patriots there. What a sweet way to make your new chief executive officer and new coach look just swell.

Kiam doesn't seem capable of controlling his own tongue. But then again, coming off a 1-15 season, maybe he figures any headlines are better than none.

Will MacPherson's rah-rah college antics go over with the Patriots? They should, at least in the beginning.

Is Tom Hodson really the quarterback of the present and future? MacPherson would like to have one starting quarterback, one developmental quarterback, and one veteran back-up, and even he doesn't know if Hodson is the starter or the developmental guy.

—P.N.

AFC CENTRAL

Cincinnati Bengals Can Boomer Esiason thrive without Bruce Coslet?

The numbers say Esiason was like a little lost pup when Coslet left as offensive coordinator to become head coach of the Jets last year. Boomer had his worst nonstrike season ever, registering a passer rating of just 77.0 after leading the AFC in 1989 (92.1) and the entire NFL in '88 (97.4).

The Coslet factor cannot be underestimated. Esiason and Coslet are best buddies; Boomer even took Coslet to a New York Rangers hockey game at Madison Square Garden a few weeks after the coach was

hired by the Jets. When the Bengals beat the Jets on opening day last season, Esiason and Coslet embraced on the field, with Boomer expressing his affection for his former mentor.

Even more important than Coslet's influence with the X's and O's was his ability to act as a buffer between Esiason and coach Sam Wyche. Both are volatile sorts, to put it mildly, and their relationship almost became totally unglued during the 1987 strike season. And without Coslet around as his security blanket last year, Esiason threw for 3,031 yards, a career-high 22 interceptions, and a career-low 24 touchdown passes.

Maybe it was just a coincidence, and Boomer was due for an off year. However, if Esiason never again approaches his productivity of '88 and '89, it will be difficult to believe the loss of Coslet didn't have plenty to do with it.

Have we seen the last of the Ickey Shuffle? Yes, unfortunately, thanks to the NFL's new rule outlawing sideline celebrations. Don't these guys have anything better to do?

Is James Francis the cornerstone linebacker the Bengals can build around? You bet. Francis was just what defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau had been pining for for the last million years. He's a 6'5", 252-pound monster who hasn't peaked yet.

—P.N.

From the makers of Jack Daniel's...



Houston Oilers Is this the year the Oilers finally drop the bridesmaid tag?

It better be. Not once since the AFL-NFL merger in 1970 has Houston captured the regular-season title in the Central Division outright. After four straight second-place finishes, the time is now—or maybe never.

Quarterback Warren Moon is coming off his best season, but his biological clock is tick-tick-ticking. Moon turns 35 in November, and that's pretty old in quarterback years. At least he was able to test his dislocated right thumb in the Pro Bowl, so he hasn't had to spend the offseason wondering if he'll ever play the piano again.

Moon operates the run-and-shoot offense beautifully and has three top receivers in their prime: Ernest Givins, Haywood Jeffires, and the reborn Drew Hill. The offensive line is first-rate. Halfback Lorenzo White came on strong the second half of last season. However, the offense isn't going to get much better.

The defense has some holes, but no more than anyone else in the division. If the AFC Central crown doesn't come Houston's way

now, it might be another 21 years before the Oilers have a better chance.

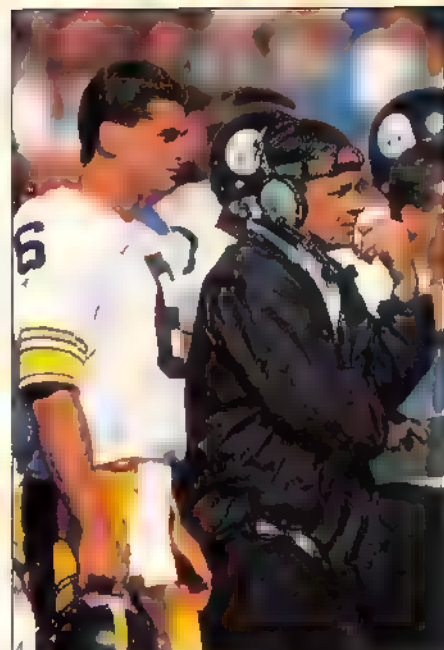
Did the Oilers waste their 1990 No. 1 pick on Lamar Lathon? Evidently. Mostly due to injuries, Lathon went bust.

Can a run-and-shoot team win outdoors in cold weather? Houston, playing in the comforts of the Astrodome, is susceptible to blowouts like the 40-20 loss in Cincy last December. Remember, a dome team has never gone to the Super Bowl. —P.N.

Pittsburgh Steelers Must Joe go again so soon?

Not yet, but the hottest issue in Pittsburgh this offseason continues to be offensive coordinator Joe Walton. Right after being run out of New York, Walton became the object of finger-pointing by the Steelers, especially quarterback Bubba Brister.

Last season coach Chuck Noll handed the reins of his offense over to Walton, whose complex system confused and frustrated many players. But after a dismal start, the offense ended up improving from worst in the league in 1989 to 22nd in 1990, and Brister finished with the best numbers of



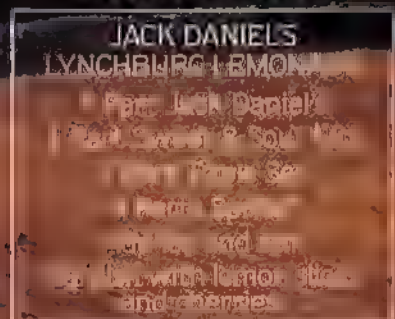
If the Steelers start in neutral again, it's bye-bye for Walton.

his career: an 81.6 rating, 20 touchdown passes, and a 57.6 completion percentage.

However, the players still weren't thrilled with Walton or his system. Noll forced Walton to simplify some aspects of the

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HOT Questions

offense early on, and he did so reluctantly. The season ended on a sour note with the disappointing loss to the Oilers that cost the Steelers a playoff spot, and the offense never really jelled. But Walton does have a solid history of improving young quarterbacks, and despite all his protests Brister did improve last season. His touchdown total was the most by a Steelers quarterback since Terry Bradshaw threw 22 in 1981, and Brister is now the team's all-time passing percentage leader, edging Bradshaw 52.1% to 51.9%.

That's more than enough reason for Joe not to go—yet. The Steelers and Walton have had their getting-to-know-you season. The grace period is over. It's all-or-nothing for Walton: Either he will be hitting the road at season's end, or he will have firmly established himself as Noll's eventual successor.

Is Eric Green the NFL's next great tight end?

Bank on it. Despite a prolonged holdout as a rookie, this 6'5", 274-pound manchild still led AFC rookie receivers and all tight ends, period, with seven touchdowns.

Can Tim Worley get out of Noll and Walton's doghouse? It'll take some heavy panting. The 1989 No. 1 pick rushed for 770 yards as a rookie but only 418 last season. —P.N.

Cleveland Browns Can Bill Belichick make Art Modell happy?

Well, at least the five-year contract Belichick signed indicates he'll have plenty of time to put a smile back on Modell's face. Marty Schottenheimer couldn't do it, and all he did was make the playoffs every year but one. Bud Carson couldn't do it, and all he did was take the Browns to the AFC Championship Game in 1989. But Belichick just may be the young phenom to pull it off.

Belichick has a lot going for him. Although he's only 39, he has 12 years of NFL coaching experience under his belt, including two Super Bowl rings as the defensive coordinator for the Giants. And he'll be assured a long honeymoon period, considering the Browns are coming off a 3-13 season and have more holes than a bagel factory. The surprise was that Modell went for another coach with a defensive background when it's the offense that has been stuck in the mud so long. But again, this shows that the owner isn't going for the quick-fix this time around. Instead of drafting for need

here, he just decided to go with the best coach available.

Modell knew he needed someone young, someone who could energize his fading franchise. When he hired Carson to replace Schottenheimer, he figured an older, experienced hand was fine to take over a team that was already on the brink of a Super Bowl berth. The only problem was, after a year on the job Carson was left with too many players almost as old as he was.

So the turnover will be great, which also buys Belichick more time. But most importantly, the five-year commitment tells him Modell finally is willing to be patient, willing to wait for a coach to make him happy. For Belichick and the Browns, there's no place to go but up.

Has Bernie Kosar had it? Unless Belichick succeeds in rebuilding the NFL's worst offensive line pronto, Kosar's best days are behind him.

Will Belichick find a way to get the ball to Eric Metcalf? It's about time somebody did. Metcalf is among the most dangerous offensive weapons in the NFL. —P.N.

AFC WEST

Kansas City Chiefs Can Marty Schottenheimer win in the playoffs?

Schottenheimer is one of the best coaches in the NFL—in the regular season. It has to be more than just a coincidence, though, that his Browns lost back-to-back heartbreakers to the Broncos in the AFC title game in 1986 and 1987, and that in his first playoff game last season in Kansas City the Chiefs blew a fourth-quarter lead to Miami.

You can't question Schottenheimer's in-season results. His Browns always made the playoffs, and if not for his feuding with Art Modell he probably would still be in Cleveland. If he was, you can be sure the Browns would not have been 3-13 last year. He went to Kansas City, turned the Chiefs around right away—but again loses a tough-to-take playoff game.

Some coaches find a way to win; some find a way to lose. Until he makes it to a Super Bowl, you'd have to say Schottenheimer's teams always find a way to gag in crunch time. Whether it's All Pro cornerback Albert Lewis foolishly going for the interception rather than the sure tackle and giving up Mark Clayton's winning touchdown, or the surefooted Nick Lowery coming up short at the buzzer, or Earnest Byner fumb-

ling near the goal line, or John Elway going on "The Drive," Schottenheimer has yet to get to the big show.

He needs to take his game to another level because the Chiefs are headed in the right direction. If you believe in the theory that a team must have playoff experience before it can have playoff success, then Kansas City could be headed to Super Bowl XXVI. The Chiefs have an explosive defense and just enough offense to get there.

Should the Chiefs trade Christian Okoye for a quarterback? No. Okoye and Barry Word, who was a revelation last year, have the ability to wear down a defense.

Could Steve DeBerg be a Super Bowl quarterback? Sure. If DeBerg can come close to his 1990 numbers the Chiefs don't need a Jim Kelly-type. —GARY MYERS

Los Angeles Raiders Is Jay Schroeder a Super Bowl quarterback?

No. Absolutely not. Forget it. There was some silly talk last season that Schroeder was a changed player, thanks to brainwashing by quarterback guru Mike White, a Bill Walsh protege. And Schroeder did seem to improve with 19 touchdowns and only nine interceptions. But when the Raiders ad-



Schroeder doesn't just throw bombs in big games—he bombs.

vanced to the AFC title game, Schroeder reverted to what he does best: Throw to the other team and lose his cool. He gave it up five times in that 51-3 championship game rout, and now you have to wonder whether Al Davis will stand pat or resume his quest to find a quarterback to get his Raiders back to the Super Bowl.

The thing to remember about Schroeder is that he's never been a polished player. He made a big impression when he took over in 1985 after Lawrence Taylor ended Joe Theismann's career, and even got the Redskins to the NFC title game the following



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HOT Questions

season. However, he flopped in that loss to the Giants; Schroeder has always made the big mistakes at the big times.

Can Marcus Allen carry the load again? Not without Bo. In Jackson's absence, Allen will really have to pace himself. He's entering his 10th NFL season, and he's not a 25-carry-per-game back anymore. Roger Craig, who has nothing left, isn't the answer.

Will Al Davis ever be happy in Los Angeles? Nah, but that's what makes Davis so much fun. —G.M.

Seattle Seahawks

Should Ken Behring give in and sign Chuck Knox to a multiyear contract?

OK, Ken, we know Knox is not the most exciting guy in the world, and he even looked like he got a little too ambitious with the weight-loss program last year, but sign the man. Now.

Knox may have done his best coaching job last season. Hey, we looked long and hard and didn't find much talent on the team he squeezed nine victories out of in 1990.



If the Seahawks are smart, they will keep Knox in the nest.

The Seahawks got off to an 0-3 start last year and surely looked like they could be headed to the Rocket Ismail derby. Knox straightened things out, though; he won nine of his last 13 games despite an extraordinary number of injuries and a decided lack of talent. And the Seahawks would have squeezed in as the No. 3 wild-card team if Pittsburgh hadn't bombed out in Houston in the final game of the season.

Knox wants a three-year extension on his \$950,000 a year deal, but Behring would like a high-profile, wide-open coach, a guy people would talk about. Well, he can have

Buddy Ryan if he wants, and Jerry Glanville figures to be available soon, but what have those guys ever done? Knox has stood the test of time as an NFL coach and still has the desire to keep going. He will not go down as one of the best because he has never won a Super Bowl, but he's as good as anybody at getting more out of less.

Is it time for Dave Krieg to go? We've been asking this question for years, and the answer is still yes.

How can Seattle make the playoffs? Simple. Healthy linebackers. In one of the more amazing stats of 1990, only one Seahawks linebacker, Joe Cain, did not spend any time on injured reserve. —G.M.

San Diego Chargers Does Alex Spanos have the patience to stick with Dan Henning?

No. And that means that Henning needs to get off to a quick start this year to preserve his employment.

Spanos, like so many of the new breed of owners who made their megamillions outside of football and look to their teams as a way of showing off to equally rich friends, is itching to win. He's willing to pay for it. He's not afraid to make moves. And he's not concerned about what people think. That makes him dangerous.

Henning is a fine coach. His biggest problem has been a lack of talent on the field. He had a 22-41-1 record in Atlanta with a sorry group of players, but during his two stints in Washington as Joe Gibbs' chief assistant the Redskins were always Super Bowl contenders.

The Chargers are getting better, but they aren't ready to make a run at the West title. That's OK. Henning must capture one of the three wild-card spots, though, or he's gone.

Last year Spanos reportedly was very close to canning Henning in October, but GM Bobby Beathard prevailed and Henning was retained. A few days later, the Chargers lost to the Steelers, who to that point had not scored an offensive touchdown. Spanos probably got hot again. However, the next week the Chargers went to New York and killed the Jets, and Henning was safe for the season.

Can Beathard hold off Spanos again? When Beathard was hired, Spanos promised him total control, and to this point, he's followed through. All the losing is embarrassing, though, and if the Chargers start slowly again Spanos will be unable to control himself and will fire the coach.

Is Billy Joe Tolliver a major league quarter-

back? Doubtful. The organization is really split on Tolliver, who has a gun but has yet to show the poise to be a playoff leader.

Why does everybody seem so unhappy in San Diego? Great city. Great weather. It's still the NFL, though, which means players will complain about their contracts and job security no matter where they play. —G.M.

Denver Broncos Has Dan Reeves had enough?

Not quite yet, but he could be getting close. If ever there was a time for Reeves to say adios to the Broncos, it was following the 1990 season. First, there were his heart problems in training camp, which thankfully didn't turn out to be too serious. Then, there were his problems with John Elway, which turned out to be pretty serious. Elway dropped a bomb in the middle of the season, complaining about the lack of communication he has with his coach. And to top it off, the Broncos finished 5-11, one of three 1989 first-place finishers to drop to the bottom in '90. As it turned out, Denver's 55-10 loss to the 49ers in Super Bowl XXIV was an indication of more bad things to come.

Reeves is in tight with owner Pat Bowlen, so he's in no danger of being run off. He can keep his job for as long as Bowlen owns the Broncos, but he shows definite signs of approaching the burnout stage, which is detrimental to his health and the health of his team. Reeves has more power than perhaps any coach in the NFL other than Don Shula, and with it comes enormous pressure, especially in a football-crazed town such as Denver. Reeves is incredibly competitive and may not have the patience to rebuild the Broncos—which is what they need to do—in an atmosphere that won't tolerate losing.

Reeves took three vastly inferior teams to the Super Bowl in a four-year span. He had a magic man at quarterback in Elway, some gifted receivers, and that was about it. Now that Elway shows signs of slowing down, it's probably a good time for Reeves to get out of town. He's been there since 1981, has been very successful, and shouldn't stay too long. He can run the club from the front office and leave the on-field headaches to somebody else.

Why was Super Bowl XXV a good game? That's easy. The Broncos weren't in it. Denver is 0-4 in Super Bowls and has been outscored in those games 163-50.

Is Elway past his prime? Check the numbers: 15 touchdowns and 14 interceptions last year. Elway can no longer win games by himself. —G.M.



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NFC EAST

New York Giants *Will the Giants crash and burn again?*

The last time the Giants won a Super Bowl, all hell broke loose. There were 11 books, a few sticky contracts to work out, some motivational problems. Oh, and a 24-day players strike. The 1987 Giants finished with a record of 6-9 (they went 0-3 in games played with replacement parts). This time, for a variety of reasons, the Giants will repeat as NFC East champions, but they probably won't go further. The '91 Giants won't crash and burn, partly because the '90 Giants weren't a juggernaut.

"We learned some things this time," says offensive line coach Fred Hoaglin. "We all realize how well we can play when we play hard. We lost some intensity when we went 10-0, but we got it back. It might sound funny, but I think this is going to be a springboard for us."

This is not to say the Giants don't have some potential problems. Coach Bill Parcells must defuse a burgeoning quarterback

Montana and Co. have the heart, but the legs are just too old.

controversy by handling Phil Simms and Jeff Hostetler with care. Then there is the matter of eight starters who are in line to negotiate new contracts—and that doesn't include special teams wizards David Meggett and Reyna Thompson.

Strangely, it's the Giants defense that bears watching. The offense has been stocked with high draft choices since 1987 and is only approaching its prime, but linebacker Lawrence Taylor is 32 and slowing down. Believe it or not, the Giants must develop a pass-rushing linebacker.

"We'll be OK," says Simms. "I don't think anything could happen that would make it as bad as [the 1987] season was. I wouldn't want to go through that again."

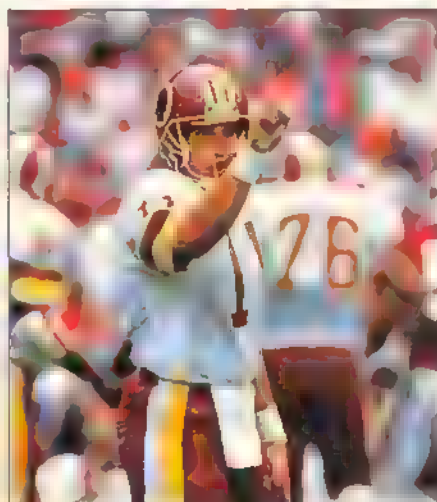
Will the coaching turnover hurt? No. Parcells will have a big hand in new defensive coordinator Al Groh's game plans.

Will the MVP of Super Bowl XXV be a starter? No. The legs may be willing, but for the first time since Ottis Anderson arrived in 1986, the Giants may not be. Ottis will play a reduced role in '91. —GREG GARBER

Make or break: This year Rypien has to live up to that finger.

Washington Redskins *Have the Redskins decided on a No. 1 quarterback?*

Washington, as it turned out, was one of the better teams in football in 1990. However, in going 0-4 against San Francisco and the Giants, it was obvious the Skins needed better production from the quarterback position. The problem is, they've already



maxed out. Last year both QBs were mediocre—and we don't expect much improvement.

Mark Rypien opened the season as starter and ultimately completed 166 of 304 passes (54.6%) for 2,070 yards, 16 touchdowns, and 11 interceptions. However, he suffered sprained knee ligaments in Game 3 in 1990 against Dallas, which left the job to Stan Humphries. In his first NFL start, against Phoenix, Humphries was magnificent—20-for-25, including a pair of 42-yard touchdown bombs to Gary Clark—but as the season progressed he was never consistent. He completed 91 of 156 passes (58.3%) for 1,015 yards, but he threw only three touchdown passes and 10 interceptions for a rating of 57.5.

After Humphries sprained his knee at Philadelphia, Rypien returned to guide the team to the playoffs. He, too, was inconsistent.

away. There are just a few too many pressing needs.

Are the running backs in decline? Yes. Earnest Byner was great (1,219 yards), but he will be 29 this season. Gerald Riggs (475 yards), who will be 31, was a major disappointment. —G.G.

Philadelphia Eagles What will life be like in Philadelphia after Buddy Ryan?

Not so hot. Division rivals rubbed their hands together with glee when the Eagles sacked coach Buddy Ryan. "It's great," said one opposing coach. "When you make a change at the top, it usually screws you up for at least a year."

There wasn't much wrong with the Eagles last year. They were 10-6 and handed the Giants their worst loss of the season by far, a 31-13 defeat that ended New York's 10-game winning streak. However, Ryan never gave himself a chance. He was 43-35-1 in five seasons, but he was 0-for-3 in the playoffs. Ryan was seen as a cancer on the team, and massive surgery clearly was called for.

Rich Kotite, Ryan's offensive coordinator, is the new coach, and his first order of business is damage control. The players loved Buddy's stuff-it attitude, and some think Kotite got the job because Cunningham pushed hard for him. It was Kotite who put the wraps on Cunningham

early in the year but relented and let him run the offense with a free hand as the season wore on.

Kotite's ascension assures some continuity, but there is an uneasy wait-and-see attitude prevailing in Philadelphia. Kotite axed a few assistant coaches but didn't bargain on losing defensive coordinator Jeff Fisher to the Rams. With the Giants, Redskins, and Cowboys all improved, it will be a tough season in Philadelphia.

Will the defense get up for Bud Carson? No. Buddy was their guy, and now he's gone.



Cunningham's got his coach; now can he get his team behind him?

ent: A great game against New Orleans was balanced by a five-interception day against Chicago. This is a big season for Rypien. He must prove in training camp that he's the genuine article. Coach Joe Gibbs says Rypien's No. 1 until proved otherwise, but the questions linger: Is Rypien's confidence as strong as his right arm?

Can the Redskins climb to the top of the NFC East? No, but they won't be that far

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HOW MANY PAYDAYS ARE THERE IN A YEAR?

Say what you want about Ryan, but he motivated his defensive players.

Have the Eagles had enough of the Prince Randall act? Yes. For several years now, Cunningham has transcended the team. Kotite must handle the sticky situation delicately. —G.G.

Dallas Cowboys Was 1990 a fluke?

Not hardly. The Cowboys, who won one game in 1989 under new coach Jimmy Johnson, surprised almost everyone with a 7-9 record last year. It was the biggest turnaround in the league and set a franchise record. Indeed, Dallas almost became the first NFL team to make the playoffs a season after winning a single game.

Johnson has proved himself as a big-league general manager. Right now the Cowboys wouldn't trade running back Emmitt Smith (241 carries, 937 yards, 11 touchdowns) straight up for Herschel Walker, and they still have a handful of players that came from Minnesota in the one-sided deal. And then, just when it looked like Johnson had messed up by drafting quarterback Steve Walsh in the 1989 supplemental draft, he squeezed New Orleans for a first-, second-, and third-round draft pick in another lopsided trade.

Now the Cowboys have to convert their 11th, 12th, and 14th overall picks in the draft into instant impact players. The offense, despite Smith and quarterback Troy Aikman, had trouble scoring points. An offensive tackle and a wide receiver would help. On defense Dallas needs a pass-rushing linebacker or lineman.

Last year, the NFC East put three teams in the playoffs and Dallas just missed. This season, with a little luck, the resurgent Cowboys could displace one of those teams by going 9-7.

Can Dallas keep Aikman healthy? Based on early returns, no. Since Aikman isn't likely to lose his courage, a few bigger, better offensive linemen might help.

Will the new offense set Dallas back? Yes, for a while. Aikman and Smith will need until midseason to learn new offensive coordinator Norval Turner's system. —G.G.

Phoenix Cardinals Will this franchise ever win consistently?

Not in this division, not in this century. The Cardinals made some strides in '90, going 5-11 under rookie coach Joe Bugel. The trouble is, Phoenix plays in the NFC

HOT Questions

East, which has three of the last five Super Bowls titles to its credit. Worse, Bugel works for a franchise that has had exactly three winning seasons since 1977. The record in the last six seasons is a nightmarish 33-61-1.

Phoenix has been dogged by the shaky personnel decisions of George Boone, which stretch back for more than a decade. One example: In 1987 Boone insisted on drafting quarterback Kelly Stouffer, even when then-coach Gene Stallings was asking for players such as cornerback Rod Woodson or defensive tackle Jerome Brown or quarterback Chris Miller. Stouffer was never signed and eventually was shipped to Seattle. If the Cardinals had taken Miller they wouldn't have had to take Timm Rosenbach in the 1989 supplemental draft, thus forfeiting what turned out to be the third overall pick in 1990.

Phoenix finally caught on a bit; the Cards elevated Larry Wilson to general manager in 1988 and reduced Boone's role in personnel decisions. It's too early to tell, but Wilson's first two drafts look like vast improvements.

Will the fans come back? Not until the team learns how to win. Prices were scaled back in 1990, but season tickets still fell to a St. Louisque total of 35,000.

Can Dexter Manley be productive again? Yes. There's still some gas left in Manley's tank, and Phoenix will give him every opportunity to succeed. —G.G.

Back from the dead: Manley gets to breathe anew in Phoenix.



NFC CENTRAL

Chicago Bears Will there be a quarterback controversy in Chicago?

Mike Ditka really likes Peter Tom Willis, a rookie last year, but for now, Jim Harbaugh goes into training camp with a solid hold on his starting job. Yet, as we've learned with Ditka over the years, that may not last.

Harbaugh started most of last season until he separated his shoulder against Detroit late in the year. Ditka thought about starting Willis right then, and again later after a sloppy playoff victory over the Saints. But he stuck with Mike Tomczak, his traditional whipping boy, who put up only three points in an embarrassing playoff loss to the Giants and then signed with the Packers as a Plan B free agent. So, the camp begins with Harbaugh back at No. 1 and Willis up a notch to No. 2.

This is Ditka's 10th season in Chicago, and he still has not had a great quarterback. Even in Chicago's Super Bowl season, Jim McMahon was not in that category. Lots of fun? Yes. Great player? C'mon. Some personnel directors compared Harbaugh's intangibles coming out of Michigan to Roger Staubach's—smart player, great attitude—but that's where the comparison ends. Next season, look for Willis to be the starting quarterback.

How much will the Bears miss Dan Hampton? A ton. If ever a player brought intangibles to the table, it was Hampton, who retired following the 1990 season.

Why does Ditka keep coaching? He's a highly competitive individual who still gets pretty focused during the season—when he isn't trying to sell us something. —G.M.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers Are the Bucs better off without Ray Perkins?

Yes. Let's put it this way: Perk ran three-a-day practices in training camp, so there aren't going to be too many players lamenting his absence this summer. Overall, Perkins had his chance, but in almost four seasons he had a miserable 19-41 record. Owner Hugh Culverhouse was patient and more than generous (\$750,000 a year and complete control), if not altogether realistic. He said before last season that he expected the Bucs to win 11 or 12 games.



No controversy here: Iron Mike stands by his man in Chicago.

That gave Perkins a very simple message: Win or else.

And he didn't win. Perkins, who never

won many friends with his personality, didn't get it done on the field. He was supposed to be a whiz with quarterbacks, but Vinny Testaverde never really got any better. Nobody doubts that Perk can judge talent—his drafts helped the Giants build two Super Bowl teams—but his record as an NFL head coach is poor. He didn't win much with the Giants, and although things picked up when he went to Alabama (he posted a 32-15 mark with the Crimson Tide), he did nothing at all in Tampa.

So, yes, we think the Bucs are better off without Perk, but we question Culverhouse's easy way out of picking assistant Richard Williamson (1-2 as an interim) as his replacement. There's nothing to suggest Williamson can turn the program around. And that means Culverhouse, who gave Williamson a modest two-year deal, will likely be looking around again real soon.

Are the Bucs really that bad? No, not really. After six weeks in '90 they were 4-2, and they have a lot of talent. They're the best bad team in the NFL.

Will Testaverde ever get it done? Nope. It's sad to say, but he looks like a player who has all the skills to make it big but has something missing from the total package. He's a big-mistake quarterback. —G.M.

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HOT Questions

Detroit Lions Is the run-and-shoot dead?

Mouse Davis is the coach of the New York/New Jersey Knights in the World League of American Football. June Jones is working for Jerry Glanville in Atlanta. The run-and-shoot is dead, dead and gone, although out of respect to Davis, Lions coach Wayne Fontes won't come right out and say it.

Evidence? You want evidence? The Lions are actually going to keep a tight end on the roster this season, and—get this—probably make him a regular staple of the offense. More? Fontes plans to keep a few receivers who actually are taller than Spud Webb. And—here's the key evidence—he might even put a blocking back in with Barry Sanders to help open some holes for the NFL's most explosive running back.

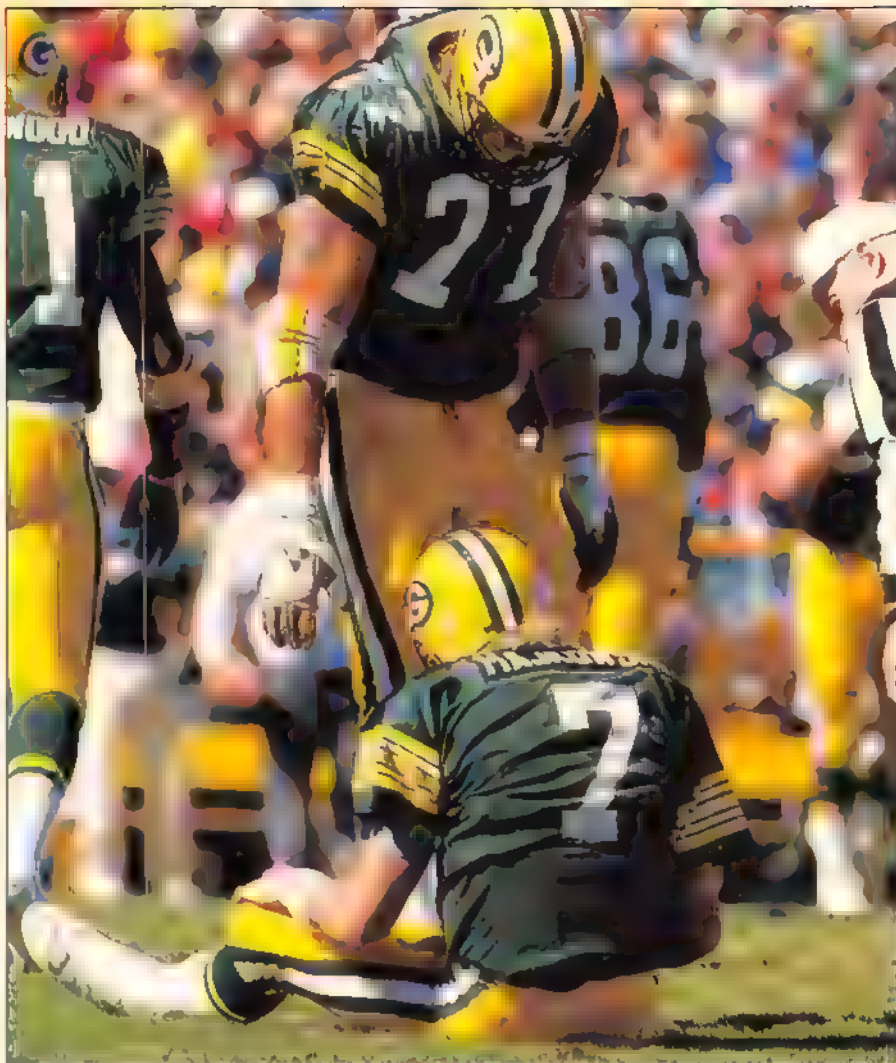
Fontes was impressed with the way Buffalo used Thurman Thomas: some one-back, some I-back; split him out and throw him the ball. Fontes will do the same with Sanders. At a minicamp in March Sanders was catching balls 25 and 30 yards down the field. Sanders did lead the NFL in rushing last year with 1,304 yards, but it didn't make sense to keep sending him up the middle. He's a little guy, but the running game in Davis' offense didn't allow for a back to get outside. Any time Sanders broke for the outside, it was not by design, and too often he was a decoy. It may take a year for Fontes to bring back the personnel to run a conventional offense, but when he does, the Lions will return to the '90s.

Has Detroit given up on Andre Ware? Not yet. The word is that Rodney Peete is the starting quarterback going into camp, but don't be surprised if Ware beats him out.

Should the Lions trade Jerry Ball? No. Detroit doesn't want to meet his pay request of \$1.3 million, but the Lions can't afford to lose their best defensive player. —G.M.

Green Bay Packers Is Don Majkowski overrated?

Yes. Asking The Majik Man to repeat what he did in 1989—four one-point victories, an NFL record—was too much. But was asking him to show up on time to training camp and then get the Packers at



Majik can't sit on his laurels for his superb 1989 season forever.

least the No. 3 wild-card spot a bit presumptuous? Of course not.

Majkowski has a winning attitude, a knack for making something out of nothing, and the charisma to be a winning quarterback, but he's fooling himself if he thinks he's the next Joe Montana. Maybe he only thinks he should be paid like Montana. The Packers took a big tumble, and the lack of magic from Majik was the main reason. He went from 4,318 yards with 27 touchdowns and 20 interceptions in 1989 to 1,925 yards with 10 touchdowns and 12 picks in 1990. Football players have short careers, but it appears Majkowski got a little greedy coming off one good year, and that may cost him in the long run.

Can the Packers win the NFC Central? Yes. Unless you believe the Bears are a hot ticket—we don't—then you almost have to lump all the teams in the division together.

How banged up were the Packers QBs last year? This tells the whole story: Blair Kiel hadn't thrown a pass in a game in three years, but he got a lot of playing time in the last month of the season. —G.M.

Minnesota Vikings Are the Vikings really a 6-10 team?

No, the Vikings don't have the talent of a 6-10 team. But they don't have the heart of a 12-4 team, either.

Here's the big problem: Minnesota is loaded with All-Pro players, but Jerry Burns never seems to find a pattern to best use them. Herschel Walker is the best example. There's no doubt that Walker can still play, but he's been hindered by two big problems in Minnesota: There may not be a more selfish team in the NFL, and the coaching strategy leaves a lot to be desired. Walker runs best out of the I-formation or as a single back. The stats back that up: Last year he averaged 4.7 yards a carry in those formations. But Burns is a split backfield/trap blocking kind of guy, and that's how he forced Walker to run the majority of his plays last year, and Herschel averaged only 2.2 yards a carry doing it.

Maybe now that former GM Mike Lynn is gone all the hard feelings that built up over the years between him and the players will disappear. Joey Browner and Anthony Car-

ter never were happy, Chris Doleman was always complaining about his contract, and the Vikings never played well in big games. However, on paper at least, this is still one of the best teams in the NFL.

Is this Burns' last season? Looks that way. This is the final year of his contract, and there's been no talk of an extension—from either side.

Who's the quarterback? It's Wade Wilson's experience vs. the scaled down offense Burns has to run with Rich Gannon. Going into camp, he's leaning heavily toward Wilson. —G.M.

NFC WEST

San Francisco 49ers *Do the 49ers have anything left?*

No. In an interview with this magazine midway through the 1990 NFL season, CBS analyst John Madden predicted the 49ers would win their third consecutive Super Bowl. There was one qualifier, however. "The 49ers," Madden said, "are the kind of team that could get old in a hurry. Some of their best players are up there in years."

In the fourth quarter of the NFC Championship Game, you could see the 49ers age before your eyes. Running back Roger Craig, 31, once the epitome of consistency, fumbled not once but twice in the fourth quarter. Quarterback Joe Montana, 35, was blasted out of the game by a wicked hit from Giants defensive end Leonard Marshall. Aside from a few big plays early on, safety Ronnie Lott, 32, was not a factor. When Matt Bahr's 42-yard field goal floated just inside the left upright as time ran out at Candlestick Park, the Giants won 15-13 and advanced to Super Bowl XXV. For San Francisco, it was probably the end of an era. Inertia is finally setting in.

The game merely confirmed what many league observers had felt for some time: The 49ers, even at 14-2, were winning largely by reflex in 1990. Even Montana and wide receiver Jerry Rice, perhaps the best players ever at their respective positions, ultimately could not hide a weak offensive line and inferior running backs.

Over the last three seasons, the San Francisco running game has produced less and less: 2,523 yards in 1988, 1,966 yards in 1989, 1,718 yards in 1990. At the same time, Montana's passing yards went from 50% of the offense, to 56%, to last year's dangerously high 67%.

The rebuilding process has begun. Both Craig and Lott went to the Raiders via Plan

B, and the 49ers do not have a viable replacement for either player. Oh, there is still a formidable defensive nucleus of Charles Haley, defensive tackle Pierce Holt, and end Kevin Fagan. And Montana, even at 35, and Rice are virtually impossible to stop. But that's about it.

Considering the decaying state of the NFC West, the 49ers will still win some games on memory and might even capture their division. Expecting anything more would be a mistake.

Can the defense keep winning without some new stars? Yes, but not for much longer. Outside of Haley, they don't have a star player in his prime who makes big plays.

How must Seifert react to mediocrity? He'll have to be patient. To this point he's been a caretaker and has never had to deal with losing. That will change this year. —G.G.

Los Angeles Rams *Were the Rams right to stick with John Robinson?*

Absolutely. Robinson is a pretty good coach. Even with the disastrous 5-11 record the Rams posted last season, Robinson's career record in Los Angeles is a spiffy 76-61. That works out to a winning percentage of .555, better than anything Buffalo's Marv Levy, Cincinnati's Sam Wyche, or Atlanta's Jerry Glanville can bring to the table.

Robinson has never been seen as the consummate X's and O's coach. Rather, his strong suits are motivation and an opera-

Robinson: One bad year doesn't necessarily make a bad coach.



HOT Questions

tional expertise that consistently produces a winner. One of the first things Robinson must do is clear the smoggy air hovering over Anaheim Stadium. Last year this was one unhappy team. Even quarterback Jim Everett, ever the company man, took some shots at Rams management after the season finale in New Orleans.

"If you look at our entire year, we were unstable," Everett said. "We were unstable at running back and where [linebacker] Kevin Greene was going to rush from. We didn't know what type of defense we were going to play. We were totally unstable. It [was] reflected in our play. There are some things management is going to have to change for this team to be victorious."

At the very least, the cast of coaches will be strikingly different. Only three of last year's assistants are back. Robinson fired five defensive assistants and replaced defensive coordinator Fritz Shurmur with Jeff Fisher of Philadelphia.

Robinson has produced results over the years despite a number of players who feel they've been underpaid. The only season he missed the playoffs prior to last year was 1987, when running back Eric Dickerson was shipped to Indianapolis. This year's Rams, especially with six postseason berths available in each conference, will be back.

Will Everett bounce back? He never really left. After leading the league in touchdown passes for two seasons, Everett tied for sixth but finally made the Pro Bowl.

Is Cleveland Gary the best running back in the division? Believe it or not, yes. Despite his flaws, Gary scored 15 touchdowns last year and gained 808 yards. —G.G.

New Orleans Saints Is Steve Walsh really the answer at quarterback?

Based on the evidence at hand, no.

Walsh arrived in New Orleans in late September from Dallas. The price was exceptionally steep: the Saints' first- and third-round 1991 draft choices, plus a conditional second-rounder in 1992. All this for the man who last season threw 12 touchdown passes, 13 interceptions, and produced the fourth-lowest passer rating in the league. Admittedly, Walsh functioned in a system more conservative than Billy Graham's neckties, but he needs more than a training camp to round off the sharp edges.

At issue are Walsh's arm strength and his ability to read the NFL's complex defenses. Walsh is only 24, so there is time to learn the coverages, but what about the arm that makes some personnel men cringe? "Listen," Walsh said before the Saints played the Chicago Bears in the first round of the playoffs, "if I didn't have the physical ability to play in this league I wouldn't be standing here talking about the playoffs."

Walsh was brought in because the Saints badly miscalculated incumbent starter Bobby Hebert's resolve to hold out. After back-up John Fourcade replaced Hebert in the last three games of 1989, Hebert vowed never to return. When the two sides couldn't agree on a contract, and Fourcade made it obvious he wasn't championship timber, the Saints pulled the trigger on the Walsh deal.

From the beginning, Walsh was erratic. Simple screen passes were dumped into the ground; open receivers weren't discovered

Is the Saints secondary as bad as its statistics? Yes, and that's pretty bad. The Saints were ranked 19th against the pass and allowed 21 touchdowns through the air.

What role should "Ironhead" play? He may weigh close to 280 pounds, but Craig Heyward's productive. The Saints need to get him the ball more often. —G.G.

Atlanta Falcons Is the run-and-shoot shot in Atlanta?

By no means. Just because the Falcons played a whole season without a quarterback and (with the exception of Andre Rison) any receivers doesn't mean they're going to scrap this pass-happy offense that was a rumor by season's end. Considering that quarterback Chris Miller did not have a

great season and Rison got little help, the numbers weren't horrific. Atlanta was ranked sixth in passing and completed 55.5% of its throws, 21 for touchdowns.

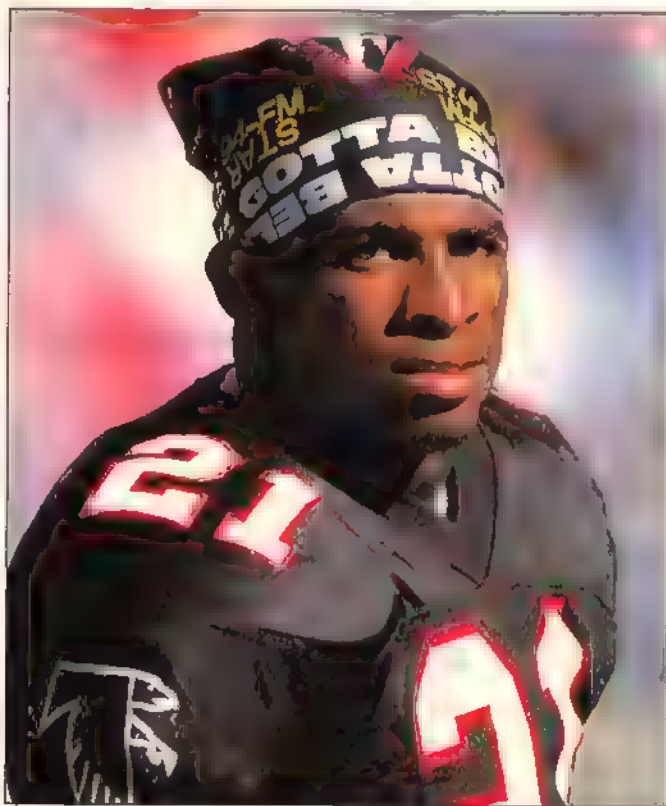
Coach Jerry Glanville, who believes Elvis is alive and playing linebacker for nearby Georgia Tech, has reaffirmed his faith in the system and hired old buddy June Jones from Detroit. The two were together in Houston, and now Jones is the man charged with putting some pop back in the Falcons' red gun offense.

A healthy Miller will help, but outside of Rison, he had

no targets to speak of. All Rison did was catch 82 passes for 1,208 yards and 10 touchdowns. The Falcons, who draft in the third and 13th positions in the draft, need to find another bookend at wideout.

Should "Neon Deion" Sanders play offense? Yes—but the Falcons will consider it only if his gig with the Atlanta Braves doesn't make him miss training camp.

Is Steve Broussard ready to grow up? Evidently not. The first-round draft choice whined a lot and didn't like to practice hurt. It got so bad Glanville took to referring to him as "she" or "her." ■ —G.G.



If Neon Deion remains out in left field he'll be out of luck on O.

until the Monday film sessions. Coach Jim Mora limited Walsh in a conservative system—in an amazing statistic, the Saints won three of the four games in which Walsh completed 10 passes or fewer.

The end result was an 8-8 record and a quick exit in the playoffs, courtesy of the Bears. Walsh will be given every opportunity to succeed in training camp, but he lacks the big-time arm the Saints need to open up the offense.

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JUST AS AMERICAN CULTURE HAS outgrown the "Me Decade," college football has managed to evolve beyond the "I Decade." That's "I" as in straight-ahead, I-formation power offense. Power football, like the power lunch and the power trio, has fallen out of favor, and in its place is a new kind of thinking: multiple sets, spread formations, multipurpose players, and a growing emphasis on finesse.

Woody Hayes would have cringed at the thought—an offensive strategy that places more emphasis on playing with a defender's psyche than knocking a linebacker on his butt—but this new offensive thinking is the hottest trend in college football. Just ask

such celebrated practitioners as Georgia Tech. Or Miami. Or Brigham Young. Or Texas A&M. Or Florida. Or Texas.

"There are no more USCs in college football any longer," says Texas offensive coordinator Lynn Amedee, whose multiple look saved Jackie Sherrill's job at Texas A&M in the mid-1980s and enabled Texas to finish in the top 20 for the first time in seven years. "The days are over when an offense lines up and tries to win games by knocking people off the ball. Just look at who's coming over these days: the Washington Huskies, Pat Dye and Auburn. Even the Big Ten schools are going with three wideouts."

The list continues to grow. Tennessee is

altering its pass protection schemes so it can experiment with a one-back look this year. Florida State is adding motion. Even USC isn't playing like USC any longer. In a 13-play scoring drive against Notre Dame last season, the Trojans showed at least nine different looks: ranging three-receiver sets, stacked backs and split backs, double tight ends, no tight ends, shotgun, and option. Coach Larry Smith scripted the entire drive, à la the San Francisco 49ers.

"More and more offenses are going multiple all the time," says Florida coach Steve Spurrier, who has successfully defied convention with his multiple attacks at Duke and Florida. "The point is this: What you



Colorado backs block, run, and catch passes from Hagan [3].

HOT Questions

Multiple Choice

What happened to power football? Do offenses geared toward finesse and spread formations have defenses on the run?

By **BRAD BUCHHOLZ**

want today is for defenses to react to you"—to respond to formations, not personnel—"and that's what offensive coordinators get with a multiple system."

Talk about guessing games: TCU spent a full week preparing for Texas Tech's four-receiver set, only to see the Red Raiders show up running two tight ends. Duke's Barry Wilson will show both extremes in a single drive: "Defenses are so good now, in terms of both physical size and sophistication, that you've got to give them something to think about." Texas kept Texas A&M off-balance with a three- and four-receiver look for three quarters, then rammed it down the field in an old-fashioned I-formation in the

decisive fourth quarter. At Florida, Spurrier even has experimented with a zero-back set.

"It may sound complicated, but our philosophy is very simple," he says. "Usually a defense will spread out for you if you show a lot of receivers. But if a defense has eight guys on the line, playing us tight, we throw it over their head. If they spread with us we run. Whenever an outside linebacker spreads out with a back who's moved to the slot, that's as good as a block—maybe even better"

Smith agrees. "Everyone's looking at matchups now," he says. "We're looking to run if a defense matches up five-on-five or

six-on-six whenever we spread out on offense. If they adapt, it's time to pass."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL HAS evolved to this point because of five major circumstances: Parity in offensive and defensive line talent after the NCAA-imposed scholarship limitations, the growing complexity and athleticism of college defenses in the '80s, the trend toward multipurpose players and spread formations in the National Football League and United States Football League, and a rules structure that has allowed offensive linemen more freedom to use their hands over the last decade. The most important factor



of all, however, is the simple realization that one-dimensional football just doesn't hack it anymore.

The Big Eight serves as the classic example. During the last 10 years, Big Eight teams spent more time in the No. 1 position of the AP football poll than those of any other conference in America. Yet, this power-oriented conference never produced a national champion until Colorado's Bill McCartney got stomped by Notre Dame in the 1990 Orange Bowl and realized that all the raw force in the world meant nothing without a reasonable passing threat to accompany it. Wisely, the Buffaloes diversified in 1990, raising their pass production from 100 to 160 yards per game in a single-season on the way to a co-national championship. While not a "multiple" team in the classic sense, Colorado opened up its passing attack by pulling some of the same tricks—juggling three-, two-, and one-back sets throughout the game and forcing the defense to play its wing players as legitimate receivers. It's no coincidence Oklahoma is making similar changes behind its young passing star, Gale Gundy.

"You can't be one-dimensional any longer. That's not being simplistic; it's telling the truth," says Vanderbilt coach Gerry DiNardo, who served as Colorado's offensive coordinator last year. "We had terrific personnel in 1989, perhaps the best in the nation. But when we were lined up in straight vanilla formations and got behind in [long-yardage situations], we were in big trouble.

"If you are a one-dimensional team, how you address situations in the other dimensions is the key to your success on offense.

Smith [32] can carry the ball up the middle and catch it outside.

First and-10 is not the most critical down for a running team; it's second-and-10. You may be a great passing team, but if you can't move the chains on third-and-three, or when the field shrinks, you're in serious trouble."

DiNardo's point is important. You don't necessarily need a tidy 50-50 balance to win big in college football today, but you must have enough versatility to keep a defense honest. Run-oriented Colorado was saved by Charles Johnson's second-half passing performance in the 1991 Orange Bowl; likewise, pass-oriented Houston was sustained for three years by Chuck Weatherspoon. The Cougars have run up some gaudy statistics the last three seasons, but Weatherspoon's may be most important of all. In addition to catching 58 passes in 1989, Weatherspoon set an NCAA record by averaging 9.6 yards per carry on the way to a 1,146-yard rushing season.

AS THE OLD USC OFFENSIVE scheme has become obsolete, so too have the traditional roles of the running back and tight end in multiple and spread offensive systems. One of the big stories this year is Ohio State's attempt to convert 1990's freshman sensation, Robert Smith, into a triple threat running back/slot back/blocker in multiple sets.

It's hardly a new idea. Miami's backs consistently rank among the team's top two or three receivers. Duke's Roger Boone set a school record with 73 receptions in 1988; his successor, Randy Duthbert, rushed for 1,023 yards and caught 50 passes in 1989. At

Florida tight end Kirk Kirkpatrick set a school record with 55 receptions after catching a grand total of 27 in his previous three seasons in the old offense. BYU's All-America tight end, Chris Smith, was the most dangerous wide receiver on the team.

This versatility has made it increasingly difficult for a defense to take the advantage in multiple and spread systems. Less complex offenses may have to substitute role players between plays to create different looks. While they achieve a desired look with substitution, they also give the defense time to compensate with substitutions of its own. With all-purpose tight ends and running backs in multiple sets, though, a team can change formations and emphasis without substitution, which gives a defense no chance at all to compensate. A single shift can transform a conservative two-tight end look into a dangerous passing set—and there's nothing a defense can do but adapt spontaneously.

"If you can have players on defense thinking to themselves just before the snap, 'Am I supposed to shift my alignment?' or 'Are we changing our coverage?'—well, they're going to be a lot more tentative," says Wilson. "We want a defensive player thinking, doubting, remembering how his aggressive upfield action took him out of the play when we ran a draw three downs ago. Maybe he won't move so quickly the next time."

To counteract this trend, defenses are becoming increasingly "multiple" as well: strong safeties that look like linebackers, linebackers that double as linemen. Washington has so many all-purpose players that it actually is able to disguise its look at the line of scrimmage—daring an offense to guess whether it will drop into six defensive backs or crowd the line with eight players.

How far will offenses go to stay ahead of the game? "I don't know," says Smith. "Formation can be a cancer in a way. The more you do it, the more you stray away from things that you do well."

"I've always run a lot of multiple formations, using the pass to set up the run. But that's not necessarily my preference. My preference is to run first and pass second. I agree that you just can't line up and knock people out of the way like you used to, but I'd love to get back to it some day. It's the best way I know to back up a strong defense—to keep them fresh by running the ball and controlling it."

Ah, the good old days. If only Woody Hayes could see us now. ■

Bobby Hurley's stellar NCAA Tournament was no surprise to BRAD BUCHHOLZ. Brad mapped out the growing importance of the point guard in college basketball in March.

FATHOM

C O L O G N E F O R M E N



FOR MEN WHOSE EMOTIONS RUN DEEP

HOT Questions

ACC

GEORGIA TECH *What can the Yellow Jackets do for an encore?* Not much after winning a share of the national championship last season. Techmania has not let up since the triumphant parade home from the Citrus Bowl last January; a book on last season is due out by the end of the summer. The good news is that most of the studs from last year, such as quarterback Shawn Jones and defensive back Ken Swilling, will return, which could make this year as fun as last season.

CLEMSON *Why do you want to be in "Death Valley" on September 28 and October 12?* Because that's when Clemson goes for some payback for last season's two losses. Georgia Tech comes to town in September, and Virginia visit two weeks later. Tigers fans feel this should be their year again, and it very well could be.

VIRGINIA *Will there be any Moore talk about Virginia being No. 1?* No. Not even in the ACC. Quarterback Shawn Moore graduated and wide receiver Herman Moore opted to go to the NFL, which left Cavaliers coach George Welsh wondering how he was going to rebuild the offense, Moore or less. Most of the burden will fall on quarterback Matt Blundin.

MARYLAND *Will Maryland beat Penn State?* As television analyst Beano Cook once said, Penn State will beat Maryland because Penn State always beats Maryland. For the record, the record is now 32-1-1, with the last (and only) Maryland victory coming in 1961.

NORTH CAROLINA *Who will have the most talked-about freshman class in the ACC?* If you said the Tar Heels, you're right. They went 6-4-1 a year ago, tied Georgia Tech, and then went out and recruited like they were Notre Dame. Not only did coach Mack Brown sweep the state (he grabbed nine players among the top 25), but he went into Pennsylvania and swiped two high school All-Americans away from Penn State.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE *Why won't the Wolfpack play in a bowl game this year?* Because of a new NCAA rule that requires six victories against Division I-A teams to



Swilling

receive a bid. The Wolfpack barely made it a year ago with a 6-5 record, which earned them a bowl bid against Southern Mississippi last year. This year one of their victories probably will be against Division I-AA Marshall—and that will be the difference.

DUKE *What will be the Blue Devils' bowl game this season?* Bowl game? That's right, a bowl game—if you consider a meeting with Clemson in Tokyo a postseason contest. The Blue Devils were 4-7 a year ago under coach Barry Wilson, and playing in what has become a pretty tough football conference makes it unlikely the Devils' football season will extend into December.

WAKE FOREST *Who will be the champion of west-central North Carolina?* The Demon Deacons, of course, after early-season victories over Western Carolina and Appalachian State. Aside from those victories, however, there doesn't seem much of a reason to be doing any celebrating this fall in Winston-Salem. —MARK BLAUDSCHEN

BIG EAST

BOSTON COLLEGE *Will the Eagles ever win?* No. Boston College has an advanced case of Rutgers disease. Jack Bicknell was fired because he didn't win enough while playing USC, Miami, and Notre Dame every year. So former New York Giants assistant coach Tom Coughlin comes along and finds himself looking at a schedule that includes Michigan, Georgia Tech, Penn State, and Louisville on successive weekends. Ouch.

MIAMI *Can the Hurricanes continue to blow away their competition?* No. They might not even be the best team in Florida in a couple of years. Florida State, under Bobby Bowden, continues to flourish, while the University of Florida is a potential giant under the guidance of Steve Spurrier.

PITT *Will the Panthers be the first Big East football team to be hit by NCAA probation?* Possibly, but insiders say that the allegations revealed in a Pittsburgh newspaper do not have much substance. They don't expect the Panthers to be penalized too severely, if at all. But the rumors have had their effects. The Panthers did not have a good recruiting year and were crushed in the state by the success of Penn State.

RUTGERS *Will the Scarlet Knights ever win?* Yes—and probably this season. After a decade of trying to go face-to-face with the Tennessees and Floridas of college football, the Knights are finally coming back to the level where they belong. This year they pick up Duke, Northwestern, and Maine, which with Rutgers' normal complement of Eastern schools should make second-year coach

Doug Graber smile a little more than he did last year, when his team went 3-8.

SYRACUSE *Where will Rocket Ismail fans go for entertainment on Saturday's this fall?* How about the Carrier Dome, where "The Missile," Rocket's younger brother Quadry, will be performing. Quadry is not in Rocket's class, but he can be entertaining. First-year coach Paul Pasqualoni could be smiling when the Orangemen open fall drills.

TEMPLE *Will Owls football coach Jerry Berndt and athletic director Charlie Theokas still be talking to each other next October?* Don't bet on it, at least not if Berndt takes Temple's schedule personally. Try this for a way to ease into the football season: at Alabama, at Pitt, at Clemson. Somehow you get the feeling that Howard—the Owls' opponent in Week 4—is going to have a rough afternoon.

VIRGINIA TECH *Who will be the best team in Virginia this season?* Yes, Virginia, Tech is that good. Why else would Frank Beamer turn down an offer to coach at Boston College? He was going to stay in the Big East anyway, and Tech, which crushed Virginia 38-13 at the end of last season and beat West Virginia 26-21, should have the best team in the state.

WEST VIRGINIA *Will Don Nehlen have a losing season two years in a row?* No. Why? Because it has never happened in Nehlen's 11 seasons in Morgantown. Last year's 4-7 record was to be expected when quarterback Major Harris left school early and most of the team that had played for the 1989 national championship against Notre Dame graduated. The last time a Nehlen team was 4-7 was in 1986; a year later it was 6-6, and two years after that, 11-1. —M.B.



Can Steve McGuire power the Canes?

BIG EIGHT

COLORADO *How far will the Buffaloes fall this year?* Way, way down. Even if quarterback Darian Hagan recovers completely from a knee injury and Orange Bowl hero Charles Johnson changes his mind about passing up his final year of eligibility, Colorado has too many holes to fill to remain a top 20 team.

Colorado's greatest asset was one magnificent class, and now those players, including nine All-Big Eight seniors, are gone.

NEBRASKA Can the Huskers win the Big Eight title without Mickey Joseph? No way—which is why Cornhuskers' fans are waiting to see if their senior quarterback recovers from a severe leg laceration sustained in the Oklahoma-Nebraska game when OU linebacker Reggie Barnes rode him into a metal bench on the sideline. With the exception of the secondary, the Huskers are stronger at every position on the field this year. But without Joseph, forget it.

OKLAHOMA Will the Sooners throw the ball more in '91? With star sophomore Gale Gundy at quarterback, Oklahoma *must* throw the ball more. Although the Sooners made a lot of noise about retooling their offense to fit Gundy's talents, they played too cautiously early in the year. Gundy averaged 15 passes per game the second half of the season and began clicking with his tight end on long routes, and Oklahoma must now kick it up to a new level and use its running backs in pass patterns. Gundy's spark in the Colorado game and his fine performance in OU's victory over Nebraska are too much to ignore.

IOWA STATE Will the Cyclones miss Blaise Bryant? Of course, but they'll miss All-Big Eight guard Gene Williams and center George Tsiotsias even more. These two blockers, who helped make Bryant famous in 1989, are gone now, which is very bad news for quarterback Chris Pederson (who passed for 1,601 yards and ran for 570 last year) and tailbacks-in-waiting Sherman Williams and Jayson Williams.

KANSAS Could this be the breakthrough year for the Jayhawks? No. Jayhawks fans made quite a fuss over last year's promising 3-7-1 season, noting that Kansas' first six losses were against top 25 teams. Unfortunately, the Jayhawks lost those six games (against Virginia, Louisville, Oklahoma, Miami, Colorado, and Nebraska) by the average score of 39-10. The Jayhawks need a lot of help on defense. Although they have terrific skill players, the conference's best set of offensive tackles, and more returning lettermen than any team in the Big Eight, the Jayhawks appear to be a year away. Tune in again in 1992.

KANSAS STATE Who's the sleeper team in the conference? Kansas State, despite the loss of starting quarterback Carl Straw. Once considered the worst major football program in America, K State jumped from 1-10 to 5-6 last year. Like Kansas, the Wildcats bring back 19 starters and fine skill players; unlike the Jayhawks, Kansas State's defense shows greater potential for short-term improvement. Despite operating out of a pass-oriented offense, Bill Snyder's team had the



Will Joseph [2] come back healthy?

fourth-best turnover ratio in the nation in '90

MISSOURI What happens if the Tigers don't play defense this year? They won't win a game. Missouri has fielded the worst defense in the Big Eight over the last two years, but the Tigers managed to win four games last season by relying on their offense. But all bets are off this year, because they lost every starting offensive skill player from the 1990 team—including the league's most dynamic passer, Kent Kiefer, and All-Big Eight wide receiver Linzy Collins.

OKLAHOMA STATE Will the Cowboys ever make up their mind about a quarterback? Three different quarterbacks started games for the Cowboys last year, a situation which cost them dearly. This season, coach Pat Jones can't afford to waver between Earl Wheeler and option specialist Kenny Ford—especially since the Cowboys no longer have Gerald Hudson, the league's leading rusher in '90. —BRAD BUCHHOLZ

BIG TEN

MICHIGAN What will make every Wolverines fan shudder? Seeing their team voted No. 1 in the polls. Michigan has been ranked No. 1 twice during the regular season in the last two years and lost the week after it was named No. 1 each time. All things considered, Wolverines fans would prefer to be No. 2 until the final polls.

MICHIGAN STATE Why should Spartans fans pay more attention to the defense this year? Because freshman linebacker Dale Person should be on the field. Person, a 6'3", 235-pound blue-chipper from Chicago Vocational High School, could be a one-man wrecking crew. He had 150 tackles in his senior year and runs the 40 in 4.6.

ILLINOIS Is John Mackovic on the NFL's short list of coaching prospects? Yes. Mackovic spent most of last winter denying rumors he was going to Philadelphia or New England or

Tampa Bay. As one of the few coaches with NFL and college experience, Mackovic was the hottest candidate not to change jobs all winter.

IOWA Will the Hawkeyes make it back to the Rose Bowl? Don't bet against it. The Hawkeyes return quarterback Matt Rodgers, and he's as good as there is in the Big Ten. Coach Hayden Fry likes taking trips to California in January—despite the inevitable results when the Big Ten faces the Pac-10 in the Rose Bowl—and would like to make it two out of two appearances in Pasadena for the Hawkeyes in the '90s.

OHIO STATE Can running back Robert Smith become the next Archie Griffin? Well, maybe not Griffin, the Buckeyes' two-time Heisman winner. But following a bad recruiting year in which the Buckeyes lost most of the top Ohio prospects to other schools, Smith will be relied upon as the backbone of the Buckeyes offense.

MINNESOTA Was the NCCA bowl ban an exercise in futility? No way. The Golden Gophers, who knocked off Rose Bowl-bound Iowa last season, return a solid young team and will field their strongest squad in years. This one really hurts.

INDIANA What will be the best thing to do in Indiana on October 16? Get ready for basketball season. The Hoosiers were a shooting star last year, starting out 4-0 and then staggering to a 6-4-1 finish. This year looks like another frustrating finish for coach Bill Mallory's team, which must play road games against Michigan, Ohio State, and Iowa in the second half of the year.

NORTHWESTERN Why is November 23 a big day for Wildcats fans? That's when Northwestern plays Wisconsin; the loser probably will finish last in the Big Ten. Northwestern's victory last year enabled the Wildcats to come home at 2-9, while Wisconsin finished at 1-10. Look for more of the same this season.

PURDUE Is there a reason to watch Purdue football this season? Yes. His name is Eric Hunter, and if there is a bright spot for new coach Jim Colletto to look at, it's his 6'5", 206-pound junior quarterback. All Hunter did was throw for 2,355 yards last year and lead the Big Ten in total offense. If Hunter can put up some big numbers the Boiler-makers will be much better than they were a year ago.

WISCONSIN Will the Badgers match their victory total of last year? Yes. And they will do it in the first week of the season. When you go 1-10 in your first year as coach, things have to get better. Coach Barry Alvarez can almost guarantee Badgers fans that better times are coming. And they should come by September 14, when Wisconsin opens its season at home against Western Illinois with what should be a W. —M.B.

INDEPENDENTS

LOUISVILLE *Were the Cardinals a one-season wonder?* No. Howard Schnellenberger may be biased, but he says he's right on schedule. The Cards stunned Alabama with their Fiesta Bowl victory, but their 11-1 record was no fluke. Although they upgraded their schedule—Tennessee, Ohio State, Florida State—the Cards should be able to handle it and should be a perennial power among Independents as long as Schnellenberger sticks around.

FLORIDA STATE *Who will spoil FSU's unbeaten season?* Bobby Bowden has to watch out for BYU coming out of the box in the second annual Pigskin Classic. Miami learned a bitter lesson last year when the Hurricanes lost to the Ty Detmer-led Cougars in their opener. If the Seminoles get past BYU, there still are dates against Michigan in Ann Arbor and a regular-season wrap-up in Gainesville against Florida.

NOTRE DAME *Who will replace The Rocket as Mr. Everything for the Irish?* Try a freshman named Mike Miller from Houston's Willowridge High School. Although the Irish did not have a banner recruiting year, they may have found a good one when they signed Miller. The 5'7", 160-pound flash is three inches smaller and 15 pounds lighter than The Rocket, but Miller has 4.3 speed in the 40 and was the most coveted high school wide receiver in the country.

PENN STATE *Will the Nittany Lions' last season as a true independent be reason for a celebration at State College?* Yes. Joe Paterno may be getting closer to collecting social security, but he is still a master at collecting blue-chip athletes. Paterno's freshman class—the one that will have the most impact when the Lions begin Big Ten play—was the best in the nation last winter.

SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI *Can new coach Jeff Bowers maintain Curley Hallman's success?* Not at first. Bowers, a former Golden Eagles quarterback, already has one game of experience, guiding the Eagles in their 31-27 loss to North Carolina State in last year's All-American Bowl. He won't have All-America quarterback Brett Favre to guide the offense, and the schedule has gotten tougher with the addition of Pitt and Colorado State.

ARMY *Will Army beat Navy this season?* No. With apologies to new coach Bob Sutton, who replaces Jim Young, it will be difficult to



Who will break Bowden's heart?

match last year's 6-5 record. Although six new opponents dot the Cadets' schedule, none of them other than Louisville are top 20 teams, but that's not the problem. It will be more difficult to replace all-everything running back Mike Mayweather.

SOUTH CAROLINA *Will South Carolina be this year's Georgia Tech?* Don't be surprised if the Gamecocks make an early-season surge in the polls. Coach Sparky Woods' team doesn't face any monsters on its schedule until it gets the Yellow Jackets on October 19. Before that is a three-game stroll against East Carolina, East Tennessee State, and Louisiana Tech. Woods also had some recruiting steals, taking players away from Tennessee and Miami.

NAVY *Will Navy beat Army this season?* Yes—and that's the only question that matters at Navy. Coach George Chaump won five games last year, which was an improvement over the 3-8 season that cost Elliot Uzelac his job a year ago. But one of the six losses was a 30-20 defeat to Army. Chaump, a proven winner when he turned Marshall into a Division I-AA power, should bring the Middies above .500 this year. —M.B.

PAC-10

WASHINGTON *Can anyone in the Pac-10 harness the Huskies?* Not likely. Washington will field the finest defense in the land this year, and its offense remains one of the Pac-10's best despite the loss of running back Greg Lewis. USC could parlay home-field advantage into an upset victory on November 9, but no one else (Washington doesn't have to play UCLA this year) has the right blend of speed, athleticism, and coach-

ing to keep up with the Huskies for a full 60 minutes.

USC *Will Reggie Perry make Trojans fans forget Todd Marinovich?* No, but he'll certainly make them remember Rodney Peete. Agile, bright, and imbued with Peete's leadership qualities, Perry gets an early shot at the starting quarterback job now that Marinovich has entered the NFL draft. Only a redshirt sophomore, Perry has virtually no game experience—a situation that makes Larry Smith a little nervous. Still, if Smith can patch up his secondary, USC should be a better team with Perry than the young team that worked with Marinovich last year.

ARIZONA *Help me, Doctor. I'm the Wildcats football team. What's wrong with me?* I'm supposed to lose to Illinois but I blow them away. I'm a 21-point favorite against Oregon State but end up as Beaver Chow. I boast about my 7-1 record against top 25 teams, then lose to Washington 54-10 and Syracuse 28-0. I yield more points than I score but wind up 7-5 and flirt with the top 25. What's that you say, Doc? I'm the most schizophrenic team in football? I should settle on one quarterback? I should try the forward pass? OK, you're the doctor.

OREGON *Will the Ducks stay afloat without Bill Musgrave?* Oregon already has brought in four quarterbacks who have stronger arms, including Michigan transfer Doug Musgrave (Bill's brother) and 22-year-old junior Sean Salisbury, the nation's finest junior-college quarterback in 1990. Doug Musgrave, considered the better of the two brothers in high school, seems on the verge of conquering mechanical problems that arose after he suffered a broken thumb two years ago. Salisbury threw for 3,328 yards and 33 touchdowns (eight in one game) during his All-America season at Palomar JC.

CALIFORNIA *Do the Golden Bears have the muscle to pull off another miracle?* With the possible exception of Stanford's magnificent Bob Whitfield, California's Troy Auzenne stands out as the most impressive offensive lineman in the Pac-10. But the Bears need more help on the line—especially on defense—to repeat last year's remarkable 7-4-1 season.

STANFORD *Who's the most underrated player in the Pac-10?* Stanford's Ron George, a junior outside linebacker who last season led the Pac-10 with 28 tackles for losses (11 more than anyone else in the conference) but didn't make any of the major all-conference teams. George gives Stanford two important defensive elements that could turn it into a bowl team: Speed on the perimeter and a much-needed pass rush.

UCLA *How good is the Bruins' Tommy Maddox?* Good enough to win a Heisman Trophy. By the end of his freshman season Maddox easily was the best quarterback in

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HOT Questions

emergence of former Texas high school legend Steve Clements. Gardere has trouble handling snaps out of the shotgun and slinging the ball downfield on longer routes; Clements, a redshirt freshman who operated the shotgun in high school and holds the state's career passing yardage mark, has no such problems.

HOUSTON Will David Klingler lead the Cougars to the Cotton Bowl? No way, unless Houston patches up its defense. Once regarded as the secret to UH's success, the D slipped badly last year. The reasons: A scholarship drain as a result of NCAA probation, Jack Pardee's departure to the NFL, and the rise of flashy offenses in the SWC. TCU's Matt Vogler threw for 690 yards (an NCAA record at the time) against UH in November; Arizona State piled up 35 first downs, 5.1 yards per rush, and 474 passing yards in December.

TEXAS A&M How many Aggies does it take to stop the run? More and more these days, in light of Texas A&M's growing weakness in the defensive line. The strain began to show last year, when Baylor rushed for 302 yards, the highest one-game total an A&M team had allowed in eight years. Although R.C. Slocum consistently fields one of the nation's great defenses, the Aggies' three-man front looks very iffy—a situation that may force A&M's notoriously active linebackers to lay off the blitz in an effort to aid run support.

BAYLOR What in the world was Robert Strait doing at fullback last year? Blocking, of course. And waiting for the Bears' top three tailbacks to complete their eligibility. Now that they're gone, however, Grant Teaff will most certainly send Strait back to tailback—a position where he established himself as one of Texas' great high school runners. Two years ago the Longhorns considered taking Earl Campbell's hallowed No. 20 out of retirement to sign Strait; now you'll see why.

RICE Will Rice have its first winning season in 28 years? If Rice's previous coaching staff had had the foresight to redshirt quarterback Donald Hollas early in his career, the Owls might be competing for a title this year. Even without Hollas, Rice will get its winning season if redshirt freshman Randall Schultz blends in quickly with a team that brings back the third-most starters of any SWC team.

TEXAS CHRISTIAN After six straight losing seasons at TCU, is Jim Wacker's job on the line? Yes, but it shouldn't be. Wacker got much more out of his talent than expected last year, when the Horned Frogs even managed to sneak into the top 25 at mid-

season. TCU needs a man like Wacker, whose integrity and good spirit are strong selling points in a conference still recovering from the scandal-ridden '80s.

TEXAS TECH What are the Golden Eagles going to do about their defense? Spike Dykes' dynamic offense has brought a lot of flair to West Texas, but his defense has given up more than 410 yards a game over the last three years. Concerned, Tech has dumped its traditional 4-3, adopted a three-man front, and experimented with multiple defensive backs. A little ball control would help; the Eagles averaged only 2.9 yards a rush in '90, next to last in the SWC.

ARKANSAS What's the hottest dance in the league? The Razorback Stomp. Sentiment against Arkansas' moves to the SEC in '92—especially from the smaller schools—is so strong that most teams aren't content to merely beat the Razorbacks while they're down; they want to rub it in.

SOUTHERN METHODIST Who's the toughest player in the SWC? SMU's junior quarterback, Mike Romo. Playing behind one of the nation's most undermanned lines, Romo was sacked 60 times in 10 games last year—and that doesn't count the pounding he took at the end of 412 pass plays. Even so, Romo rolled up some extraordinary stats in his first two years, passing for 5,361 yards and 33 touchdowns. Mercifully, the Mustangs plan to mix some twin-back sets with its run-and-shoot this year, which just might save Romo's life.

—B.B.

WAC

BYU Will Ty Detmer win another Heisman Trophy? No. The backlash from last year will hurt the Cougars quarterback. Many voters



Can Detmer earn another Heisman?

conceded they had made a mistake when they selected Detmer over Rocket Ismail. Unless Detmer throws for about 5,000 yards this season, he won't get the benefit of the doubt on many voters' ballots.

COLORADO STATE Can the Rams repeat last

year's 8-4 season? No. As good a coach as Earl Bruce is, he can do only so much when graduation wipes out fully half of his starting offense and defense. Bruce will have to rebuild the Rams for a season before they become a WAC power again.

SAN DIEGO STATE Can the Aztecs win without Dan McGwire? Not this year. They barely were above .500 last year when McGwire was playing himself to a higher position in the NFL draft. Without him, and with the usual tough nonconference schedule (UCLA, Miami), the Aztecs should drop a bit.

WYOMING Why will Tom Corontzos be a household name throughout the WAC this season? If Ty Detmer has an off year at BYU, Corontzos is the best candidate to step into the breach. The 6'3", 190-pound senior will be the key to new coach Joe Tiller's offense. If he comes through, the Cowboys could surprise people the way they did last year when they went 9-3 and earned a bowl berth.

HAWAII Who will have their season spoiled by a late-season loss to the Rainbows? Try Notre Dame. Just like BYU a year ago, the Irish will come to the Islands at the end of the year, relaxed after another grueling season, and run into a team that will surprise them. If you want to pick a late-season upset, take the Rainbows.

AIR FORCE Who will win the Commander in Chief's Cup as the best service academy? Air Force. Fisher DeBerry has had only one losing season in the past nine years. He was 6-5 last year in a rebuilding season, so count on an improvement this year.

UTAH What did Ron McBride learn in his first year as head coach of the Utes? He learned that "Where's the beef?" is the key to winning in the WAC. Although the Utes had superior skill players last year, they still finished a dismal 4-7, so McBride went out and recruited the biggest linemen he could find. He came up with 13 solid line prospects, which should help build the Utes back into winners within a year or two.

NEW MEXICO Why will the Lobos be celebrating on September 21? Because they will be home after taking a three-week road trip to El Paso against UTEP, to Fort Worth against TCU, and then to Hawaii. All three probably will be losses, making their game against Nevada-Las Vegas a very special homecoming.

UTEP Why should UTEP drop the "EP" from its name? So the Miners can recruit some players under the guise that they'll be attending the University of Texas. Seriously, you know you have a problem when a Texas school can't get one first team all-state prospect from Texas to commit. The Miners came up nearly empty recruiting in-state, which is very bad news. ■ —M.B.

WE'VE GOT THE HOTTEST LINEUP IN BASEBALL.



Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday Nights



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USUALLY BY NOW IT'S ONLY A whisper. *The Cubs could contend this year.* Then some overused expression follows: If their pitching holds up, or if some of the kids come through, or even more insipid, if they catch a few breaks. But these are the new Cubs, in a new old Wrigley Field complete with luxury boxes and lights, and the whispers have given way to shouts free of insecurity and historical burdens. There are no apologetic tones these days emanating from the ballpark at the intersection of Clark and Addison. No kids have to come through; they don't need to catch a few breaks. Sure, the starting pitching has to hold up, but whose doesn't? These Cubs aren't looking for ghosts or magic. They think they've got the best team in the National League East, and they're not afraid to say so.

The only whispers heard now are coming through the back door, and they sound something like this: *Sure, the Cubs have a talented bunch of players, the best money can buy, but come September their whole is likely to add up to less than the sum of the parts. They're too passive, too undirected, too quiet. Andre Dawson, Ryne Sandberg, Mark Grace, Shawn Dunston, Jerome Walton, George Bell—they can play, but where's the leadership?*

Can \$13 million buy off history? That's what the Tribune Co. is about to find out, because that's how much the parent company of the Cubs boosted the team's payroll by signing three high-priced free agents (Bell, starting pitcher Danny Jackson, and closer Dave Smith) in a stunning reversal of management policy. When the Cubs trot out to their positions this season, three recent MVPs are among them. Dawson won the National League award in 1987, Sandberg the NL in '84, and Bell, the spice that's been added to this already potent stew, the AL MVP in '87. When the Cubs front-office types take their seats they do so with a newfound confidence—and at the same time, with a glance over their shoulders. President Don Grenesko and general manager Jim Frey are the team's riverboat gamblers. The cards they're holding look good, but the stakes have been raised precipitously; their free-spending ways have brought to Wrigley an unfamiliar guest—great expectations.

The Cubs have always played the baseball game by their own set of rules. Frey says when he originally came to the Cubs as manager in 1983 he couldn't believe how much the team's fans were still living in the past. "'69, '69, '69—that's all I heard," he says. Frey could not understand how a team

mostly noted for losing a pennant race could hold such an exalted position in fans' memory. A division crown in 1984 (the first title of any kind since 1945) put to rest talk of the fabled 1969 team but didn't completely banish the losers tag that still dogs the team; neither did the 1989 division winners. To do that, the Cubs have to get to a World Series.

Myths have taken the field with the Cubs for decades. They've been either a second opponent or an ally, depending on your point of view. For example, the one about ever-loyal Cubs fans: Grenesko knows otherwise. "Everyone just assumes the Cubs have always drawn well," says the Tribune CPA turned baseball executive. "The most the Cubs had ever drawn prior to the Tribune Co. taking over [in 1981] was about 1.6 million in 1969, and we've beaten two million for six of our last seven years."



He's no diplomat, but Bell has no problem making a bat ring true.

Myth No. 2 celebrates the way the benevolent Cubs have maintained a policy of free television broadcast of nearly all their games over superstition WGN out of generosity to their fans. "One of our marketing strategies—and this goes back to the Wrigleys—is televising as many games on free television as possible," says Grenesko. "I think that has worked extremely well for us. We feel it helps our attendance. That's been a cornerstone of our marketing philosophy, to get the Cubs name out there. To us it's three hours of advertising to get on the air."

The Tribune Co. owns both WGN and the Cubs, so the club's financial considerations are completely different than those of most clubs. The money WGN makes for the Tribune Co. through national advertising during Cubs games is as much a part of overall revenue as the attendance dollars or the money WGN pays the Cubs for rights to

the broadcasts—and the Tribune Co. isn't giving away hints at how all this works out. The Cubs revenue is well hidden in the company's books, indecipherable even to other club owners who have passed ownership guidelines in recent years recommending no new superstition/club ownership deals be allowed. But since WGN's fortunes are intertwined with the Cubs, the stakes are higher: There's more money to play with, more money to make, and more money to lose if the team flounders, WGN ratings drop, and advertising revenues fall.

This year the Tribune Co. has sought to destroy a more recently evolving bit of legend before it could outstrip fact: that the Trib was content to make a profit off the Cubs but saw no reason to spend the money necessary to build a winner. Last year the team's salaries totalled about \$14 million; this year the figure is more than \$27 million.

Frey says he had never asked the Tribune Co. for free-agent money until after the '89 season. The Cubs made big bids on Robin Yount and Mark Langston two winters ago but were turned down. Last year Frey asked, and Smith and Jackson expressed interest in the Cubs as soon as the bargaining began.

"I think the image of the Cubs has changed dramatically in the last few years," says Frey. "The image of the club was of a losing team that drew fairly well and ownership that didn't particularly care if they won, and everybody else was getting impatient with that."

The players know there's been a change. "If they'd have gone out and gotten one of these guys I think everybody in the clubhouse would have been tickled to death," says starting pitcher Rick Sutcliffe. "I think management tried to go out and get those guys [in 1989], but I don't think that realistically any of the major free agents wanted to come here. I think this is the biggest change that's ever happened to the Cubs. All of a sudden, now playing for the Chicago Cubs is something everybody wants to do."

Considering that the Cubs struggled to a 77-85 record last season, all the attention beckons analysis. Jackson began the windfall by signing a four-year contract in November, and he says his first priority was playing with a winner. During negotiations the Cubs told Jackson he might be the first but probably wouldn't be the last free agent to sign with them before the 1991 season. Frey convinced Jackson that Cubs ownership had embarked on a new commitment to winning. "I had a good feeling that this team is going to have a good shot not only once, but two, maybe three times, hopefully four times [while] I'm here to be able to go to the playoffs and World Series," Jackson says.

Bell was next, plugging a left field hole

THREE MEN

AND



The signing of
Danny Jackson,
George Bell, and Dave
Smith shows the Cubs mean business

A PENNANT

that has plagued the Cubs since Gary Matthews quit patrolling the area. Smith, a 36-year old closer, came about a week later in December, looking for a chance to play for a winner. "[With] the acquisitions of George and Danny, [the Cubs] obviously went out and spent some money to fill any needs they had," Smith says. "They pretty much made my decision easy."

The front office has made its statement and its noise. Now it is up to the players to do the same. But making noise is not what the Cubs have been about in recent years. The team's best players, Dawson and Sandberg, behave as if they're trying to embody the baseball cliché of leading by example. Nobody talks about becoming "family" around the Cubs locker room, or tinkers with an image like the "Nasty Boys." Off the field the Cubs are a pretty anonymous bunch, and that, at least partially, might be by the design of the front office.

THE 1984 CUBS WERE A spirited bunch, but with that one year's exception, they didn't win. By the time Frey took over as GM in 1987, he saw the need for a change in attitude. A minor incident in 1988 provides some insight into Frey's thinking.

The club was preparing to play its historic first night game in Wrigley Field amidst a carnival-like atmosphere, but the weather had other ideas, drenching Wrigley with a steady downpour that left the infield tarp slick and full of puddles. A few of the team's players ran out on the field and entertained fans by playing 30-foot slide atop the tarp. The crowd cheered; the moment epitomized the fun-loving Wrigley gang. The next day Frey announced fines for the players who participated. Frey says his two primary concerns were that the players could have been injured, and that they might have encouraged fans to come out on the field and join them. But he also admits that the incident was a little too symbolic of the way the old Cubs behaved. Within a year, two of the water babies—catcher Jody Davis and pitcher Al Nipper—were gone, along with the heart of the 1984 division champs: Keith Moreland, Lee Smith, and Leon Durham.

You will rarely find Dawson or Sandberg playing a practical joke or shouting in the clubhouse. If there's frolic around these Cubs, more than likely Dunston or Dwight Smith will be at the center of it, but they aren't truly team leaders. Trying to pinpoint the team's leaders can be like bunting a man over in the early innings. Is it really necessary? Depends on who you ask. The Cubs won in 1989, and nobody complained about

the team's leadership or chemistry then. They faltered in 1990, though, and the questions began.

It's fitting that the game that relies least on intangibles to define itself, that is most full of statistics to break down everything of substance, has the most trouble pinning down the concept of leadership. The leaders on a football or basketball team are obvious, and if they do not exist their absence becomes even more glaring once you see the team perform. However, you can ask players, coaches, and managers about leadership on a baseball team, and they scratch their heads before attempting an answer that often goes nowhere.

"I think it [leadership] is overrated," says Dawson. "If you're having a good year as a ballclub, the guy that's having a good season is going to be the designated leader."

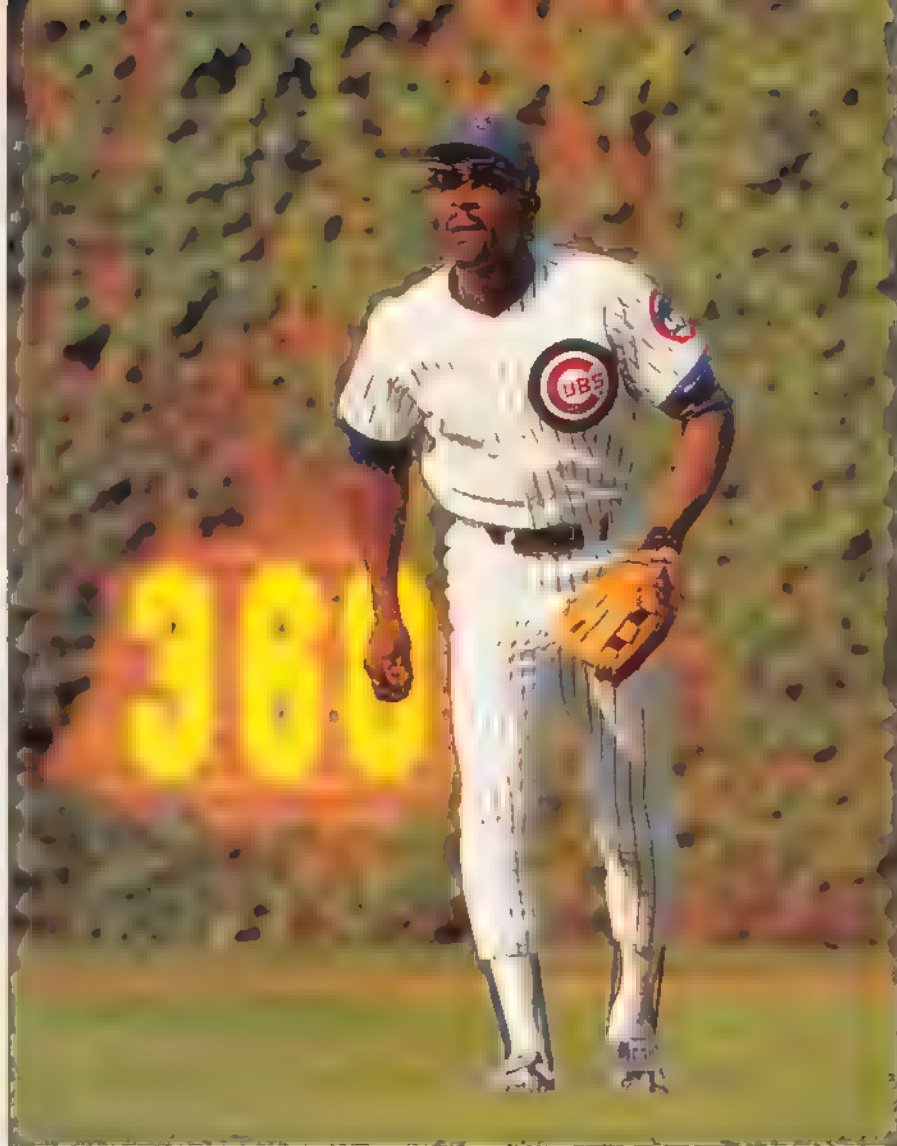
"You're only going to go as far as your pitching allows you anyway. I played on a team back in 1987 when we had a team filled with leaders. We led the major leagues in home runs, I was the MVP that year, I had guys around me that had the best years of their careers—and we finished in last place. It's overrated. When you play as a team you pick each other up day in and day out."

The last outspoken leader on the Cubs was Matthews, the man who set the tone for the 1984 championship season. "Sarge" took control of the clubhouse from the day he arrived in a surprise trade just before the season was to begin. Sandberg says Matthews transformed the team within a matter of weeks. "We weren't winning too many games in spring training—there was that type of attitude, kind of like, 'Here we go again,'" he says.

"He just brought around a positive attitude that we were going to win. Some of us were thinking 'What do you mean, we're going to win? We lost last year.'" Sandberg says Matthews' boisterous personality and positive attitude was so infectious that a few weeks into the season everybody on the team was talking like Sarge.

Those Cubs had never won before. This year's edition is a mostly veteran group that experienced a division championship season just two years ago. Not everybody thinks Matthews' form of leadership is necessary. "As far as someone who's like a sergeant or a major, we don't have anybody like that and that's fine with me," says first baseman Grace.

The idea that one player can make such a fundamental difference in the fortunes of a baseball team runs contrary to the individual nature of the game. But baseball players never have to develop either the combined spirit of football players or the communication skills of their basketball counterparts. They perform alone, they contribute indi-



vidually, and often, even on the best of teams and with the best of players, live lives separate from one another.

BASEBALL ALWAYS HAS BEEN A game of miracles and near-miracles, and so most teams start loose and confident in the spring. And that translates into the elusive quality known as chemistry. The Red Sox found their miracle in 1975, the Braves in 1957, the Twins in 1987. On four fifths of the teams beginning this season players were truly able to convince themselves they could make a run at a division crown if only one or two starting pitchers realized their potential.

Who picked the Pirates last year? Only those who knew Neal Heaton would get off to an All-Star start and Doug Drabek would elevate his game to the top level. Two years ago Baltimore almost won the AL East with a starting rotation only Frank Robinson could have hoped would pitch as consistently as it did. Minnesota won a World Series with just two solid starters—Frank Viola and Bert Blyleven.

Last year the Cubs finished fourth, and

Dawson's not a vocal leader, but he's outstanding in his field.

their pitching staff was in shambles. Fifteen different pitchers started games, as opposed to eight in 1989. This spring, they talk as if last year was the aberration, and maybe they are right. Sutcliffe, Jackson, Greg Maddux, Mike Bielecki, Mike Harkey—there is reason to believe any one of them will provide consistent starting pitching this season, and reason to believe any of them won't. Sutcliffe, Jackson, and Harkey are all returning from arm problems; Bielecki and, to a lesser extent, Maddux have displayed inconsistency. Earl Weaver said, "Momentum is tomorrow's starting pitcher." Well, chemistry is as good as your starting rotation. And last year, the Cubs had neither.

Joe Girardi had a front row seat as the Cubs' starting catcher. "A lot of times when you're in a rut, it's a pitcher stepping up and winning a big game," he says. "Dave Stewart does that for the A's, where he always turns them around, and Roger Clemens does it for the Red Sox. I think we missed the leadership on and off the field with the pitchers."

"So much of it depends on one player. You've got to score runs, but in football, if your whole offensive line doesn't block it's going to be a long day. In basketball, if two guys who are scorers don't score it's going to be a long day. But it only takes one guy in baseball: the pitcher. If the pitcher doesn't have his day it's a long day."

When fans think of leaders they start with everyday players. The players know differently, though. Cubs players point to the loss of Sutcliffe last year as if it initiated a loss of self-confidence. Jackson, also noted as a tenacious competitor on the mound, may eventually qualify as Sutcliffe's spiritual replacement. At Jackson's first press conference as a member of the Cubs over the winter, the pitcher stated he could contribute to the club beyond his performance on the field.

Jackson thinks leadership starts with helping a team play loosely, and that starts with the pitching staff. "If you've got good pitching and good defense it makes every other aspect of your game relax a little bit more," says the lefthander, who put together a 23-8 record in his last injury-free season (1988). "And if you do lose one close ball game, you know you've got a quality guy going up there the next night."

Last year's Cubs offense performed at nearly the same level as 1989, scoring 690 runs compared to 702 a year earlier. The team batting average rose from .261 to .263. Both years the defense committed 124 errors. The difference was the pitching, and not just in a club ERA that zoomed from 3.43 to 4.34. Sutcliffe thinks pitching leadership goes beyond consistent starts.

Dunston became a believer in Sutcliffe early on. "I'll never forget Shawon's first game in the big leagues," says Sutcliffe, "when he started in 1985 at shortstop. [In] the 5th inning he made an error and I said, 'Get ready, the next one's coming to you.' Now I had no idea, but I'll be damned if the guy didn't hit the next ground ball right to Shawon and Shawon threw the guy out. And he just laughed at me. He still thinks to this day that I purposely made that guy hit it to him."

Sutcliffe says the 1989 Cubs season was marked by a plentitude of lucky plays, bad decisions turning out well, and second-line players such as Doug Dascenzo, Rick Wrona, and Lloyd McClendon making unexpected contributions. "Our third base coach, Chuck Cottier, sent guys where they should have been out by 20 feet—yet the throw was off the mark, and if we don't send them we don't win," he says. But even luck can be encouraged.

"In 1989 we had three guys—Bielecki, Maddux, and myself—that went out there every third and fourth day and gave you a

good solid quality start. And when you get that six out of seven, seven out of eight days, you're going to win a lot of ball games that you normally shouldn't win." The Cubs in 1989 played loose, with a self-confidence that allowed them to take chances and a freedom that only comes when players are anticipating a competitive game every day.

Even the few clubhouse jockeys still left in baseball admit their roles are limited. Dave Parker, now with the Angels, has earned his leadership stripes over an 18-year career, and he says direct confrontation doesn't work anymore.

"I think it's important that you have a loose atmosphere," Parker says. "When I first came to the major leagues in Pittsburgh, with Dock Ellis and Willie Stargell, it was an everyday thing. Dock kept everything loose, guys had an attitude while you were around the ballpark, and it just created a good atmosphere to play in. Oakland had the same thing, a loose clubhouse. When you've got a loose clubhouse then you can say things to guys, even if it's in a needling way or it's correcting something they're doing wrong. I think it's more acceptable when you become a unit and it's fun. If I can joke Rickey Henderson about a pair of shoes that he wears I can definitely tell him, 'Hey, you've got to run out that ball to first base.'"

Of course, there's one man on each team who is paid to lead, to keep the team loose and its members alert and attentive—the

manager. And the Cubs just happen to employ one of the most controversial of those.

WHEN DON ZIMMER'S NAME comes up it's usually attached to terms such as "old-fashioned" or "unpredictable." In an era of computer printouts and statistical analyses of every bit of strategy down to the lowliest bunt, Zimmer manages for fun. He considers the individual players in his moves as much as the statistics and then often throws both considerations out in favor of a hunch. Zimmer smells momentum; it's as if he has hairs on the back of his neck which tell him when the tide is starting to turn against his team. He asks players how confident they feel about hitting against this guy in the 9th, or about facing a certain pitcher with the bases full, but he will also wait until a few hours before game time before informing a pitcher he is going to start that day.

Zimmer has spent a career careening between the labels of genius and idiot, and he's been the same man all along. In 1989 the Cubs committed at least 11 successful suicide squeezes, and at one point Cubs catchers had thrown out seven straight runners on pitchouts with 2-and-2 counts. Genius. In 1990 Walton sulked, and Mitch Williams went from "Wild Thing" stopper to ineffectiveness and confusion about his bullpen role, and questions arose as to whether the old-fashioned Zimmer was out of touch with today's players. Idiot.

There's one thing Zimmer is sure of:

The Cubs gambled mucho dinero on Jackson's rehabbed shoulder.



When it comes to clubhouse chemistry, he's at an advantage over any player. "There are some guys in the clubhouse who can keep a club loose in a touchy situation," he says. "I can go either way. I can make them tight, or I can make them looser."

All soldiers want to think the general they follow is inspired, that he's leading the squad to a weak spot in the enemy's line, not into an ambush. With the media calling Zimmer a genius in 1989, the manager became a leader, and he used the label to take pressure off his players. The players talk about being kept on their toes, not knowing what Zimmer would ask of them next, about feeling an edge, and it was meant to work that way.

"I told them in spring training," says Zimmer. "I said, 'Boys, I'm a goof. Don't take nothing for granted here, because I'm liable to do anything at any time.' So it shouldn't be no surprise. Anybody that's been on my team for three years, nothing should become a surprise. Because we've just about done everything, and that's why they've got to stay on their toes."

If Zimmer manages from out of left field, it applies to his psychology as well as his strategy. Rick Sutcliffe calls his manager "a hard-nosed type guy," and admits to having submitted to Dr. Zim's therapy.

"In 1989 [in the] second half of the year, I'm struggling," he says. "My shoulder's bothering me—I had the torn cartilage and all that—but I'm still trying to pitch because the club's still playing well behind me. Even though I'm terrible, we win. When I pitched, we won. So I kept going out there. And finally he got frustrated with me because I had changed my pattern. I wasn't pitching in. Well, it hurt to throw a fastball in to a lefthander.

"So he calls me into his office one day and he says, 'What in the world you doing out there?' And he says, 'I can't believe that you're making all these bad pitches.' He says, 'Let me call your pitches for you.' This is my 17th year in baseball and 12th year in the big leagues. I said, 'Fine, you call them.' And he kind of looked at me like, 'You've got to be kidding.' I don't think he really thought I would agree to that, because he knew in years past there was no way, nobody had ever called my pitches for me.

"Well, three days later, right before I went out to warm up, he called me in his office and he says, 'You still want me to call your pitches?' I said, 'You're calling them all. Whatever the catcher puts down, that's what I'm throwing.' First inning, we whipped through it. Second inning, we whipped through it. Third inning, base hit, base hit, base hit. Bases loaded, Howard Johnson, Darryl Strawberry, Kevin McReynolds coming up. Zim comes running to the



From the dome to daylight: Smith faces an adjustment to Wrigley.

mound. New York, crowd's packed, everything's on the line. Here he comes out to the mound. I can't wait to hear what he's got to say. He called all those pitches, those runners on the bases are his, he's the one that put them out there. He said, 'I got one thing to say to you.' He looks up with that grin that he has and he says, 'You're on your own.' He says, 'I ain't calling no more pitches.' And Girardi and I are standing there on the mound just laughing. It was just hilarious.

"They got one run that inning, and I ended up winning the game 7-3. It got me back on track, and I won my last two starts. It was an off-the-wall type thing—it took a lot of pressure off me. It was probably the first time I'd smiled in a month."

ANY RECENT DISCUSSION about leadership in baseball invariably leads to one man: Don Baylor. Toward the end of his career teams were acquiring the slugger as much for his influence in the clubhouse as for what he could do on the field. And as division titles were won by those teams, an almost mythic presence preceded Baylor to each new team.

Baylor refuses to minimize the impact of a leader in the clubhouse. His record speaks well: world championships in Baltimore and Minnesota, pennants in Boston and Oakland, a division crown with California. In his last three seasons Baylor played for three different pennant winners—the Red Sox, Twins, and A's of, respectively, 1986, '87,

and '88. "I could remember all of the writers looking at me like I was some kook from outer space when I told them that we had a chance to win," he says of his arrival in Boston in '86. "They had picked that ballclub to finish fifth. We pulled that ballclub together as a team. Guys did things together. Now instead of 25 guys taking 25 different cabs, all of a sudden guys started playing together as a team, and we started winning games."

In some ways, what Baylor did was assume the role of a manager in the clubhouse. "I had to take charge a lot of times in a pennant race. Writers would come in and grill a young pitcher who had just been pummeled, putting ideas into his mind that he couldn't pitch in a pennant race or the team was choking and things like that. I had to intercede a couple times and kick all the writers out. One time in Kansas City I had to do that just to save a young player from even thinking about getting out on the hill the next time in that situation and having that pressure that he *has* to win."

One of Baylor's favorite roles was presiding as judge of the kangaroo court. He started a court in Boston to encourage players to think about making the team-oriented plays that don't show up in the boxscore (or the salary arbitration hearings). Still, Baylor considers the outspoken clubhouse leader a dying breed and estimates that fewer than five such players are left in the major leagues. He thinks they've been done in by the big money that can create envy and selfishness on a grand scale. Today's ballplayers often don't stick around the clubhouse long enough after a game to

foster the camaraderie on which leaders such as Baylor thrived.

THE CUBS WILL BE COUNTING on their leadership by committee this season. Certainly the front office has made its statement with the Tribune Co.'s money. By spending that money Frey has put some pressure on himself. A Cincinnati childhood chum of Zimmer's, the affable GM also isn't averse to taking a risk.

"People say, 'Well, you're willing to roll the dice,'" he says. "Well, I rolled the dice when I got rid of four veteran players that were well-liked in Chicago [Durham, Moreland, Davis, and Smith] and started with kids and we won.

"I hear people say in this business you live on the edge and you can get fired any time. I don't care, and I never did. When I managed I didn't care, and that's probably why I got fired."

Grenesko, the club president, thinks the Cubs are so loaded nobody is going to feel too much pressure by the end of the season. Three free agents is better than one by his arithmetic. "We don't expect all three of them to have super years," he says. "If two of the three work out and have very good years I think we would be satisfied. We told them that none of the three had to come in and be a savior. Who knows with Langston last year—when you've got a free agent who comes to a new team and he's making \$3 million or \$4 million dollars a year, maybe subconsciously there's a lot of pressure on that one guy to really turn the team around. We told them, 'You don't have to do that. We've got a very strong nucleus of a ballclub here. And if you come in and have a good year, you don't have to have a career year, we're going to be very competitive.' George Bell doesn't have to hit 40 home runs if he can hit 25. Sandberg doesn't have to hit 40 home runs again. If he can hit 25, perfect. Dave Smith doesn't have to have 40 saves. If he can get 25, that's all we need."

Grenesko is trained to look at the bottom line. He's not taken with team images nor swept up in tradition. He's also the man who best knows how far the Tribune Co. is willing to go into its deep pockets. When asked for the bottom line on the Cubs, he puts aside the CPA evasiveness for just a moment and says, "I think it's time for the Cubs to have a winner. The lovable loser image is nice, but nobody likes that. Nobody likes to have that tag." And he sounds like he knows something. ■

This thoughtful article by PETER KORN almost can be read as a companion piece to his work in the June I.S. concerning the value of veteran leadership in the NBA playoffs.

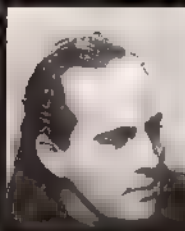
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YOU START WITH WHAT YOU have, which, if you are a typical general manager in the National Basketball Association, is not nearly enough. And then you trust the future of your franchise, your job, and many millions of dollars to a youngster who could be either the next Michael Jordan or the next Len Bias.

NBA franchises are built through the draft. For the Boston Celtics, Larry Bird was the first ingredient in their championship squads of the 1980s. They didn't even qualify for the playoffs in 1978 and '79, but since drafting Bird they have not missed the playoffs, and they won the NBA championship three times in the decade.

For the Los Angeles Lakers, Magic Johnson was the final piece in the puzzle. Also drafted in 1979, Johnson helped the Lakers to the NBA finals eight of the next 10 years.

The Detroit Pistons began to turn it around when they drafted Isiah Thomas. With some nearly flawless selections, Pistons general manager Jack McCloskey built his franchise into two-time world champions by finding Joe Dumars, John Salley, and Dennis Rodman after others had passed them by.

Even at best, drafting is an inexact science. Scouting and experience and intuition are all at the mercy of whimsical young men suddenly made rich by the promise of what they can do with a basketball. As Jerry Krause, the vice president of basketball operations for the Chicago Bulls, says: "Only three things are sure: Death, taxes, and that that mistake of yours is going to go out there and embarrass you 80 times a year."

Most general managers try to cut mistakes to a minimum by devising a system, a philosophy. Some prefer athletes. Some choose intelligence. And others take players who can play more than one position. But all of them love height.

Billy Cunningham has been around pro basketball for 25 years. He played in the NBA and American Basketball Association, he coached the Philadelphia 76ers—reaching 300 victories quicker than any coach in NBA history—and he's now a partner in the Miami Heat. His draft philosophy, though usually only an impossible dream, is to "draft players with all the attributes: athletes, smart, character, tall, guys who can play more than one position.

"But the most important thing is, you have to have the feeling they can play. If they can't play, you don't waste your time looking for all that other stuff."

The problem with the draft is that you are



dealing with young men—very young men—who are talented and mercurial and unpredictable. "You're looking for good kids," Cunningham says, "and the major factor is that the game is important to them. Some of them sign for a lot of money, and now they're happy and comfortable. You worry about that." And Krause, whose draft philosophy leans toward athletic players, says, "There ain't a player in the world that ain't got warts."

"Teams use psychological testing now, and if a kid has a squeak we know it," says Krause. "Our philosophy is, we won't ever tolerate a questionable kid if you're going to spend millions of dollars on the guy, you better know what you've got."

On the other hand, McCloskey, whose

successful drafting in the '80s is openly envied by some general managers, says his draft philosophy is simply stated. "The first three things we look for," he says, "are talent, talent, and talent. Then we look at character."

He does not, though, mean to undervalue character or the damage that can be caused by the lack of it. "We have passed on some people who had tremendous talent because of verified information about them," he says. "Some of them played in the league and have done OK, but I wouldn't say any of them had great careers."

In Cunningham's eyes, the importance of character has been emphasized as the size of contracts has increased. "Our philosophy is to have as much information as possible," he

who transformed their clubs into perennial winners, each went to a team with an established star in the pivot: Dave Cowens in Bird's case, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in Johnson's. When Jordan arrived in Chicago, Caldwell Jones was the Bulls' starting center. When Krause took over, 10 months after Jordan was drafted, he found a franchise "with a lot of good athletes—Quintin Daley, Jawann Oldham, Steve Johnson, Wes Matthews, Orlando Woolridge—who didn't fit."

Jordan is the only player remaining from that 1984-85 Chicago team. And though Krause has been successful in filling most positions around Jordan with skilled players, he has yet to come up with a bona fide big man—which gets us back to Perdue, the less-than-stylish 7-footer who caused Krause to abandon his search for athletes for at least one draft. Perdue has the attribute that most often causes general managers to deviate from their stated philosophies: height.

Bob Bass, the San Antonio Spurs vice president of basketball operations, says he

24 in the draft a lot of people don't make it. And with his size and his skills, if he does make it, with David Robinson, we would have two big guys for a long time."

THERE ARE FAR MORE TALL projects in the NBA than short ones. Coaches and general managers are reluctant to give up on 7-footers, because guards may lose their quickness and touch with age but 7-footers will always be seven feet tall.

Perdue has scored fewer than 700 points and has grabbed fewer than 600 rebounds in his first three NBA seasons. The Pistons are still trying to make something of 7'1" William Bedford, picked sixth in the first round by Phoenix in 1986. Bill Wennington, who stands seven feet tall, has played six seasons though he has never averaged more than five points or rebounds a game. Paul Mokesku has parlayed his 7-foot frame and an accommodating attitude into a 12-year NBA career despite averaging only 4.0 points and 3.4 rebounds. In the NBA, they love big, and those who question that usually live to regret it.



All things being equal, NBA general managers draft for height. But UNLV's Larry Johnson [in red] mixes the muscle and moxie that will beat out the big men

REBEL ROUSER

says. "What we don't want to do is wind up with a surprise."

Krause has the unique problem of trying to build a championship franchise around Jordan, the most dominant individual player in the NBA. He's the first to admit there is no formula for building a winner and no formula for constructing a draft.

"There are a lot of ways to skin a cat," he says. "I've had a philosophy, but I've found I sometimes deviate from it. We've drafted athletes, but we drafted Will Perdue in 1988 and he's not especially an athlete. We knew he'd be a three- or four-year project. Dan Majerle was available when we took Perdue and he was more of an athlete, but we didn't have a young center on our team."

Though Bird and Johnson were the men

looks first "for athletes, because Larry [Spurs' coach Larry Brown] puts so much emphasis on being able to defend. So with nearly every one of our guys we take into consideration how they move." But when 7'2" Dwayne Schintzius—whose ongoing war with the University of Florida coaching staff ended when he quit the team in 1990, 11 games into his senior year—was still available at the 24th spot in the draft last summer, Bass forgot athleticism and character questions and jumped at the opportunity to get Schintzius in a Spurs uniform.

"The upside was that he could be a very good player," Bass says. "Or he could fail. You can draft some whom you know will not fail; they won't be stars, but they will not fail. We knew Dwayne could fail, but at No.

Krause recalls looking on in wonder when Seattle made its first-round draft pick in 1977. "I remember when they drafted Jack Sikma," Krause says of Milwaukee's center, who just completed his 14th NBA season. "I said, 'What did they do that for?' Boy, I learned to regret it. When you're a young scout you tend to believe you know a lot, but you learn. The business will humble the hell out of you. I know guys who don't like hyper kids, and I know guys who don't like quiet kids. You have your own philosophy, but nobody is wrong."

An old scout who has been through all the things Krause talks of is Forddy Anderson, for the past three seasons chief scout of the Boston Celtics. He's charged with the task of finding people to rebuild the Celtics'

aging team and restore its tradition. Anderson is 70, and he has seen the evolution of the game. He relies on instinct as much as statistics or philosophy. His priority now is "uptempo players, somebody who



Boston stretched a bit for Shaw, but liked his winning attitude.

can push the ball up the floor effectively," he says, "because that's the kind of game [Celtics rookie coach] Chris Ford wants to play.

"Besides talent, you sometimes just have to have the feeling this guy really knows how to win. He may not be pretty, but he knows how to win. Brian Shaw is the best example of that. He wasn't even known much to our group, and because of that they were hesitant to draft him. But I just went back to that feeling. I told them, 'This guy can play.' We were looking at David Rivers and Everett Stephens, and I felt he could play better than those guys—that he knew how to win.

"You just have to get lucky to get one of those."

You especially have to get lucky if you work for a franchise such as the Celtics, Pistons, or Lakers, who in recent years have been drafting near the bottom because of their success on the court. Shaw was the 24th player taken in 1988, and Anderson concedes, "You just have to do your homework and be lucky."

PROBABLY NO ONE HAS BETTER combined those two ingredients than McCloskey, whose first decade with the Pistons included draft picks of Larry Drew, Isiah Thomas, Kelly Tripucka, Cliff Levingston, Antoine Carr, Tony Campbell, Joe Dumars, John Salley, Dennis Rodman, and Lance Blanks. "It's amazing to me that he's never got the executive of the year

award," Krause says of McCloskey. "That's a joke. I have great respect for the man. He has done a great job of coordinating his players."

But McCloskey is no more rigid in his draft strategies than anyone else. Indeed, flexibility seems to be the theme that has made the Pistons draft strategy a success—and it all begins with Thomas.

"We look first to our need," says McCloskey. "But in our first draft we took Larry Drew, a point guard, and the next year we took Isiah, another point guard, because there was no way we could pass him up. So I guess you could say our philosophy is, 'OK, we're going to draft for our need—that's No. 1. No. 2 is, if an exceptional person is there, forget No. 1.'"

There is in this, as in everything, the element of luck, too. In 1981, when the Pistons drafted Thomas, they had the second pick in the entire draft. Dallas took Mark Aguirre first; had Dallas taken Thomas instead, the Pistons would have taken Aguirre, and maybe the Mavericks would be two-time NBA champions by now.

Probably McCloskey's biggest draft success was Rodman, who went 27th in the 1986 draft. Rodman had been named the small-college player of the year in his final season at Southeastern Oklahoma State, but his background was spotty. He hadn't played basketball in high school, had worked as a janitor at the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport and at an auto body shop, and had left Cooke County (Texas) Junior College after a single semester.

Then, after his final year at Southeastern, he raised more questions with a subpar showing at a pre-draft camp in Chicago. "He was awful, I mean just awful," says McCloskey, "and people dropped off him."

The Pistons, though, knew why he had been awful in that Chicago camp. "We sent our trainer, Mike Abdenour, over there to check on the condition and the character of the players in the locker room, and Mike informed me that Dennis was suffering from asthma," McCloskey says. "We were debating taking him ahead of John Salley [who was drafted 11th], but when people dropped off him, we gambled that he would be there for our second pick. We took a chance and held our breath."

Now that the Pistons have won the NBA title in back-to-back seasons, McCloskey finds himself in the same predicament as others who have preceded him. He's drafting long after the cream of the crop is gone. Jerry West, the Lakers general manager since 1982, frankly admits: "Where we've

been drafting, there haven't been many people in recent years that we've liked. To me it isn't about philosophy; it's about doing the right thing—and you don't always do the right thing.

"Your heart is always in your throat. You just hope to find a kid down there who can play in the league. You look for something specific that he can do well. Drafting down there forces you to take a risk when you don't really want to take a risk."

Of the players drafted by West, only James Worthy, A.C. Green, Vlade Divac, and rookie Elden Campbell were in the NBA at the beginning of this season. That, though, is more a reflection of where the Lakers drafted than of West's abilities.

Cunningham has seen the draft process from both ends of the spectrum, first as head coach of the highly successful Philadelphia 76ers in the early 1980s and now as part-owner of the Miami Heat. "In Philadelphia our philosophy was to draft by position, to take the guy who could fill a role," he says. "When we took Andrew Toney it was because he had the ability to play both guard positions; when we took Mo Cheeks it was because we needed a lead guard; when we took Charles Barkley it was just because he was the best player available.

"With Miami, we've been in a position where we had picks in the top 10. Rony Seikaly was the player we wanted to start with. In our situation we want to take the best player available. We don't want to make a mistake."

The best player philosophy likely will be in effect in the 1991 draft as well. UNLV's 6'7" Larry Johnson is no center, but he's



Rodman wheezed in the pre-draft camp, but has soared ever since.

comparable to Barkley in that he has the kind of all-around talent that would make him worth taking at No. 1.

Bass believes the best strategy is always to take the best player available. "The times I've drafted by need, I've always been disappointed by what I've ended up with," he says. "If the player doesn't fill a need you have, you can make a deal later. But the worst thing you can do is to draft somebody and then find out they can't play."

Gene Banks is probably Bass' favorite draft choice. Taken in the second round in 1981, Banks helped the Spurs advance twice to the Western Conference finals. "He was an athlete, but he wasn't a very good shooter so everybody backed away from him," Bass says. "What they didn't see was the size of his heart."

"You don't always know what you're getting, though. You like to think you can tell a guy's heart before he plays with you, but sometimes these guys fail you. Occasionally you'll get a guy who really busted his ass in a college situation, but you get him here and out on the road with a little money in his pockets and he lets you down."

One of the most outspoken of the league's executives, Krause confesses that "through the years the one thing I have found is there's no set way to do anything." And he has proved that by drafting athletes such as B.J. Armstrong and Brad Sellers; by drafting Perdue, the project; and by drafting Yugoslavia's Toni Kukoc last summer, though the 6'9" forward has indicated he's not sure that he'll play in the U.S.

"Leon Douglas [a former Piston and Kansas City King] put me onto him," Krause says. "They played together in Europe. It's unusual when a black guy tells you a white guy is good, but Leon called him a 'ghetto rat.' He said he plays 'like a brother.' He doesn't play like a European; he plays like he's from here."

Before drafting Kukoc, Krause had his staff do research on the ethnic makeup of Chicago. "There are more than 200,000 Yugoslavians in metropolitan Chicago," he says. "So that's a factor. He'll have an easier transition because of that."

Of course, Kukoc may never play in Chicago, or in the NBA. Like most draft decisions, that one was a gamble. On draft day—whether you're picking first or last—little is certain, but McCloskey may have the perfect guy in mind.

"If you've got a guy with talent and brains and character," says the Pistons GM, "then you've got a senator from New Jersey." ■

From the perfect draft pick to the perfect player: CHARLIE VINCENT does it all. Charlie profiled the NBA's elite players—the best of the best—for I.S. in December.

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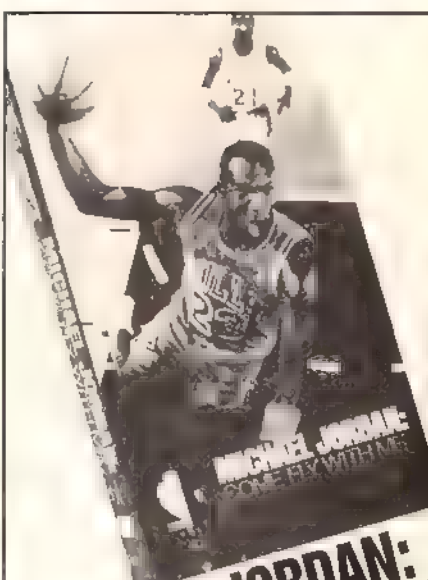
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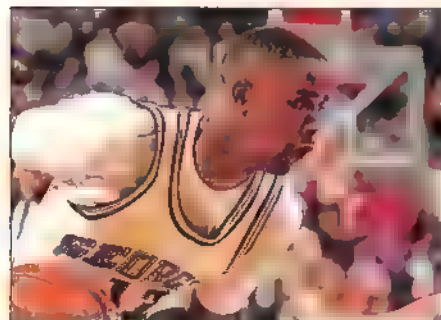
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PLAY THE LOTTO

Point Guard

The only question scouts have about diminutive Kenny Anderson is whether he can survive the NBA grind; virtually all agree that he has the explosiveness and leadership ability to run a pro offense from the get-go. What's more, Anderson should



Anderson's batteries should be juiced by the NBA, the ultimate challenge.

be rejuvenated by the challenge, something that the prospect of another year at Georgia Tech seemed to lack. Greg Anthony and Eric Murdock are pickpocket defenders and capable ball-handlers, but how well can they shoot the rock? And mighty mites Keith (Mister) Jennings and Elliot Perry are super-quick off the dribble, but to what extent will they be liabilities on the defensive end? The most intriguing prospect in a somewhat shallow backcourt talent pool is Chris Corchiani, a scrapper in the mold of Scott Skiles, who could be off the board as early as the late first round.

Off Guard

Multitalented Steve Smith is the only sure-fire scorer of this bunch, and in an era when two-position players are in high demand, Smith's ability to swing to small forward is sure to turn NBA coaches into smiley faces. Mark Macon, considered by many to be the best ball-handler and defender at the position, improved his stock with a scintillating all-around showing in the NCAA Tournament. Nonetheless, doubts linger in the minds of some scouts about his lack of discipline. Is he indeed a more mature Mark Makin? Or is he still Mark Missin', as he was in 1988 when he turned in a woeful 6-for-29 shooting performance in the East Regional final? A similar question has been asked about Rodney Monroe, albeit for a different reason. As one scout points out, "At 6'3", he won't be able to create the same kinds of shots in the pros as he did in college."

AN ANALYSIS BY NBA SCOUTS

INSIDE SPORTS here ranks the top 54 seniors eligible for the June 26 NBA draft. Underclassmen who rated as first-round prospects were graded regardless of whether they chose to enter this year's draft.

Point Guard

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	B	Q	D	P	Total
7	Greg Anthony, 6'2", UNLV	2.5	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.5	16.0
16	Eric Murdock, 6'2", Providence	1.5	2.5	3.5	4.5	2.5	14.5
26	Chris Corchiani, 6'1", N.C. State	2.5	3.5	3.0	1.5	3.0	13.5
30	Elliot Perry, 6'0", Memphis St.	1.5	3.5	4.5	1.5	1.5	12.5
32	John Crotty, 6'1", Virginia	1.0	4.0	2.0	2.5	3.0	12.5
36	Mister Jennings, 5'7", E. Tenn. St.	3.0	4.0	4.0	0.5	0.5	12.0
39	Greg Sutton, 6'2", Oral Roberts	4.0	1.0	4.0	1.5	1.5	12.0
(So.)	Kenny Anderson, 6'2", Georgia Tech	3.0	5.0	5.0	2.5	3.0	18.5

Off Guard

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	B	Q	D	P	Total
8	Mark Macon, 6'4", Temple	1.5	4.0	3.0	3.5	3.0	15.0
24	Rodney Monroe, 6'3", N.C. State	4.0	3.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	13.5
37	Jason Matthews, 6'3", Pitt	3.5	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	12.0
38	Darrin Chancellor, 6'5", So. Miss.	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	12.0
44	Myron Brown, 6'3", Slippery Rock	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.5	2.5	11.0
52	Steve Hood, 6'7", James Madison	3.5	2.0	2.5	1.0	1.0	10.0
(So.)	Harold Miner, 6'5", USC	3.5	3.0	3.0	2.5	1.5	13.5

Swing Guard

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	B	Q	D	P	Total
11	Doug Overton, 6'3", LaSalle	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5	14.5
20	LaBradford Smith, 6'3", Louisville	3.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	14.0
23	Joey Wright, 6'2", Texas	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	14.0
40	John Taft, 6'2", Marshall	3.5	1.5	1.5	2.5	3.0	12.0
42	Randy Brown, 6'3", New Mexico St.	1.5	1.5	3.5	3.0	2.0	11.5
(So.)	Jimmy Jackson, 6'6", Ohio State	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	2.5	15.0
(So.)	Terry Dehere, 6'4", Seton Hall	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	1.5	13.5

Off Guard-Small Forward

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	B	Q	D	P	Total
5	Steve Smith, 6'6", Michigan St.	4.5	3.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	16.5
27	Jimmy Olver, 6'6", Purdue	3.5	2.0	3.0	1.5	3.0	13.0
34	Kevin Lynch, 6'5", Minnesota	3.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	12.5
(Jr.)	Todd Day, 6'8", Arkansas	3.0	2.5	3.5	3.0	2.0	14.0

Small Forwards

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	R	A	D	P	Total
4	Stacey Augmon, 6'8", UNLV	3.0	2.5	4.0	4.5	3.0	16.5
22	Brian Shorter, 6'6", Pitt	3.5	3.5	2.5	2.0	2.5	14.0
25	Rick Fox, 6'7", North Carolina	4.0	2.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	13.5
33	Kevin Brooks, 6'8", SW Louisiana	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.0	1.5	12.5
43	Cameron Burns, 6'7", Mississippi St.	2.5	2.5	1.0	2.5	2.5	11.0
47	Robert Youngblood, 6'7", Southern	3.5	2.0	2.5	1.5	1.5	11.0
48	Bob Harstad, 6'6", Creighton	3.0	2.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	10.5
49	Roy Fischer, 6'7", California	2.5	2.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	10.5
51	Marcus Kennedy, 6'7", E. Michigan	2.5	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.5	10.0
(Jr.)	Bryant Stith, 6'5", Virginia	3.0	3.0	3.5	2.5	2.0	14.0

Small Forward

Here's a comforting thought for those Eastern Conference rivals who must bang heads regularly with Charles Barkley: A second Sir Charles may be on the way in Larry Johnson. "Barkley handles the ball a bit better, and Johnson is nearly two inches taller," says an Eastern Conference scout. "Otherwise the similarities between them are unmistakable. Eventually Johnson will be in Barkley's class as a scorer and a rebounder, and physically Johnson is a man among boys, much like Barkley." Billy Owens is big enough to excel up front yet agile enough to operate in the backcourt, which means he's a certain lottery pick despite nagging doubts about his shooting ability. Stacey Augmon—the best defensive stopper in the draft, regardless of position—is another lock to visit lottery-land. However, at least one scout calls him "a supplementary player" because of his comparatively limited offensive skills.

Power Forward

Many second-guessed Doug Smith when he opted to return to Missouri for his senior year, but the former Big Eight player of the year did nothing to hurt his lottery pick status in a season that saw few seniors step forward at the position. "He may not be a franchise player, but there's a lot to like about him," says one NBA scout. "He rebounds well, likes to play defense, and scores enough to keep opponents honest. Most of all, he's a gladiator in the mold of Buck Williams." Blue-collar worker Mark Randall, earth-mover Victor Alexander, efficient Pete Chilcutt, rebounder deluxe Dale Davis, late-comer Anthony Avent, defensive-minded George Ackles (who could become the fourth UNLV product among the opening 27 picks), and Charles Oakley clone Perry Carter are considered to be top 45 material.

Center

Clearly, the opening prize of the draft would have been Shaquille O'Neal's to keep, had the 7'1" manchild chosen to bolt LSU as a sophomore. "He's the only sure impact player out there," says one scout. "When he comes out, the team that gets the first pick will be able to name its price in trade." Adds another talent broker, "It won't be long before he makes people forget Hakeem Olajuwon." Although the rest of the field pales by comparison, there are an inordinate number of bona fide pivotmen, chief among them skyscrapers Dikembe Mutombo, Luc Longley, and Rich King, and midsized models Shaun Vandiver and Chad Gallagher.

—PAUL LADEWSKI

Small Forward-Off Guard

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	R	A	D	P	Total
45	Louis Banks, 6'5", Cincinnati	2.5	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	11.0
(Jr.)	Billy Owens, 6'9", Syracuse	3.0	3.0	4.5	3.5	4.0	18.0

Power Forward

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	R	A	D	P	Total
3	Doug Smith, 6'10", Missouri	3.5	4.0	3.5	2.5	3.5	17.0
9	Mark Randall, 6'9", Kansas	2.5	3.0	2.5	3.5	3.5	15.0
14	Victor Alexander, 6'9", Iowa St.	3.5	3.5	1.0	3.0	3.5	14.5
17	Pete Chilcutt, 6'10", North Carolina	2.5	3.0	1.5	3.5	3.5	14.0
21	Anthony Avent, 6'9", Seton Hall	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.0	3.5	14.0
35	John Turner, 6'9", Phillips	1.5	2.5	1.0	3.0	4.0	12.0
41	Perry Carter, 6'8", Ohio State	0.5	4.0	1.5	2.5	3.0	11.5
54	Greg Dennis, 6'11", E. Tenn. St.	2.5	2.0	2.5	1.0	1.0	9.0
(Jr.)	Alonzo Mourning, 6'10", Georgetown	2.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.0	15.5
(Jr.)	Byron Houston, 6'7", Oklahoma St.	3.0	4.0	2.0	2.5	4.0	15.5
(Jr.)	Sean Rooks, 6'11", Arizona	3.5	2.5	2.0	4.0	2.5	14.5
(Jr.)	Adam Keefe, 6'9", Stanford	4.0	2.5	2.5	2.0	3.0	14.0

Swing Forward

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	R	A	D	P	Total
1	Larry Johnson, 6'7", UNLV	4.0	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.5	20.5
12	Chris Gatling, 6'9", Old Dominion	3.5	2.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	14.5
19	Keith Hughes, 6'8", Rutgers	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.0	3.0	14.0
31	Melvin Cheatum, 6'8", Alabama	3.0	2.0	3.0	2.0	2.5	12.5
46	Mike Polite, 6'7", Florida St.	1.5	3.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	11.0
53	Treg Lee, 6'8", Ohio State	1.5	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	9.5
(Jr.)	Clarence Weatherspoon, 6'7", So. Miss.	3.0	4.0	2.0	2.5	3.5	15.0

Power Forward-Center

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	R	A	D	P	Total
18	Dale Davis, 6'11", Clemson	1.5	4.0	2.0	3.0	3.5	14.0
28	LeRon Ellis, 6'10", Syracuse	3.0	2.5	3.0	2.0	2.0	12.5
29	George Ackles, 6'10", UNLV	1.5	3.0	2.5	3.0	2.5	12.5
(Jr.)	Christian Laettner, 6'11", Duke	3.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	2.5	14.5



Shaun Vandiver



Doug Smith



Larry Johnson

Center

Overall

Rank	Player, Height, School	S	R	A	D	P	Total
2	Dikembe Mutombo, 7'2", Georgetown	3.0	4.0	3.0	4.5	3.5	18.0
6	Luc Longley, 7'2", New Mexico	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.0	16.5
10	Rich King, 7'2", Nebraska	3.5	2.5	3.5	3.0	2.5	15.0
13	Chad Gallagher, 6'10", Creighton	3.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.5	14.5
15	Shaun Vandiver, 6'10", Colorado	3.5	4.0	1.0	2.5	3.5	14.5
50	Alvaro Teheran, 7'1", Houston	1.5	2.0	1.5	3.0	2.5	10.5
(So.)	Shaquille O'Neal, 7'1", LSU	4.0	4.5	4.5	5.0	4.0	22.0

S = shooting; B = ball-handling/passing; Q = quickness/penetration; D = defense; P = physical presence/durability; R = rebounding; A = agility.

NUMBERS

DYING ON THE VINE

A baseball team's offense consists of two things: getting runners on base and bringing them home. In 1990 only one team averaged 13 runners on base each game: the Boston Red Sox. But the Red Sox scored only an average number of runners, 4.3 per game, leaving an average of 7.61 men on base each game. The worst team for leaving men on base, however, was the Philadelphia Phillies, with 7.67 runners left on base each game. Here are the average number of runners each team put on base, the number it scored, and the number it stranded.

National League				
Team	Runners	Runs	LOB	LOB Pct.
Philadelphia Phillies	12.3	3.99	7.67	62.1
Los Angeles Dodgers	12.2	4.49	6.99	57.2
Pittsburgh Pirates	12.2	4.52	6.92	56.9
San Francisco Giants	12.1	4.44	7.20	59.6
San Diego Padres	12.0	4.15	7.03	58.7
Cincinnati Reds	12.0	4.28	7.02	58.4
Montreal Expos	12.0	4.09	6.95	58.0
New York Mets	12.0	4.78	6.88	57.1
St. Louis Cardinals	11.8	3.70	7.19	60.8
Chicago Cubs	11.6	4.26	6.94	59.6
Houston Astros	11.5	3.54	6.99	61.0
Atlanta Braves	11.5	4.21	6.63	57.8
NL Average	11.9	4.20	7.03	59.1

American League				
Team	Runners	Runs	LOB	LOB Pct.
Boston Red Sox	13.0	4.31	7.51	58.6
Detroit Tigers	12.7	4.63	7.25	57.0
Oakland As	12.6	4.52	7.38	58.5
Seattle Mariners	12.5	3.95	7.57	60.7
California Angels	12.5	4.26	7.42	59.5
Baltimore Orioles	12.4	4.16	7.64	61.4
Toronto Blue Jays	12.4	4.73	6.87	55.5
Texas Rangers	12.3	4.17	7.21	58.4
Kansas City Royals	12.2	4.39	6.98	57.2
Milwaukee Brewers	11.9	4.52	6.83	57.4
Minnesota Twins	11.9	4.11	6.77	57.0
Cleveland Indians	11.9	4.52	6.55	55.1
Chicago White Sox	11.6	4.21	6.44	55.5
New York Yankees	10.9	3.72	6.54	59.8
AL Average	12.2	4.30	7.08	58.0

By Philip Meneely

KEEPERS OF THE CROWNS

Maybe Pete Rozelle knew what he was talking about. Of the major professional sports leagues, the National Football League appears to have shared the wealth, in terms of championships, better than any other. Two NFL franchises, the Green Bay Packers and Chicago Bears, have won more than 10% of the league's crowns (including three of the 25 Super Bowls), but the National Hockey League, the National Basketball Association, and major league baseball all have at least two teams that have won more than 17% of their titles, led by the NBA's Boston Celtics, with 16 of a possible 41 championships, or 39%. Listed below are the pro sports franchises that have won at least 10% of their league's titles.

Rank	Team (League)	Titles	Possible Titles	Pct.
1.	Boston Celtics (NBA)	16	41	39.0
2.	Montreal Canadiens (NHL)	21	64	32.8
3.	New York Yankees (MLB)	22	87	25.2
4.	Minneapolis-L.A. Lakers (NBA)	10	41	24.3
5.	Toronto Maple Leafs (NHL)	11	64	17.1
6.	Green Bay Packers (NFL)	8	58	13.7
7.	Chicago Bears (NFL)	7	58	12.0
8.	Detroit Red Wings (NHL)	7	64	10.9
9.	Philadelphia-Oakland Athletics (MLB)	9	87	10.3
9.	St. Louis Cardinals (MLB)	9	87	10.3

By Jeff Magalif

MAKE 'EM COUNT

Baseball is a game of outs. Even the best hitters fail 70% of the time. The key to success on the diamond is making the most of the times you do succeed. In 1990 Cecil Fielder of the Tigers led the major leagues in runs batted in, and he also had the best ratio of outs-to-RBI. Fielder made 415 outs and drove in 132 RBIs, that's an RBI for every 3.14 outs. Barry Bonds of Pittsburgh, the National League MVP, led the NL with 3.30 outs per RBI. Listed below are the players with the best outs-to-RBI ratios in baseball last season.

American League				
Rank	Player, Team	RBIs	Outs	Outs/RBI
1.	Cecil Fielder, Tigers	132	415	3.14
2.	Jame Quirk, As	26	87	3.35
3.	Jose Canseco, As	101	359	3.55
4.	Jay Buhner, Mariners	33	118	3.58
5.	Kelly Gruber, Blue Jays	118	432	3.66
6.	Mark McGwire, As	108	401	3.71
7.	Danny Tartabull, Royals	60	230	3.83
8.	Bo Jackson, Royals	78	304	3.90
9.	Dan Pasqua, White Sox	58	237	4.09
10.	Sam Horn, Orioles	45	185	4.11

National League				
Rank	Player, Team	RBIs	Outs	Outs/RBI
1.	Barry Bonds, Pirates	114	376	3.30
2.	Kal Daniels, Dodgers	94	320	3.40
3.	Andre Dawson, Cubs	100	367	3.67
4.	Matt Williams, Giants	122	450	3.69
5.	Darryl Strawberry, Mets	108	400	3.70
6.	Bobby Bonilla, Pirates	120	453	3.78
7.	Glenn Davis, Astros	64	248	3.88
8.	Eric Davis, Reds	86	338	3.93
9.	Eddie Murray, Dodgers	96	379	3.95
10.	Francisco Cabrera, Braves	25	99	3.96

By Philip Meneely

DINGER DENSITY

Detroit's Cecil Fielder led the major leagues in 1990 with 51 home runs—but that's not all. He also led in outs per homer. Fielder notched 159 hits in 573 at-bats, which means he made 414 outs. He also was caught stealing once, so that's 415 total outs and 51 home runs, for a ratio of 8.14 outs per homer. Former Padres slugger Jack Clark led the National League at 9.92. Listed below are the majors' top outs-to-homer hitters of 1990.

American League				
Rank	Player, Team	HRs	Outs	Outs/HR
1.	Cecil Fielder, Tigers	51	415	8.14
2.	Kevin Maas, Yankees	21	192	9.14
3.	Jose Canseco, As	37	359	9.70
4.	Mark McGwire, As	38	401	10.55
5.	Bo Jackson, Royals	28	304	10.86
6.	Fred McGriff, Blue Jays	35	393	11.23
7.	Rickey Henderson, As	28	340	12.14
8.	Steve Balboni, Yankees	17	266	15.65
9.	Rob Deer, Brewers	27	351	13.00
10.	Sam Horn, Orioles	14	185	13.21

National League				
Rank	Player, Team	HRs	Outs	Outs/HR
1.	Jack Clark, Padres	25	248	9.92
2.	Darryl Strawberry, Mets	37	400	10.81
3.	Kevin Mitchell, Giants	35	379	10.83
4.	Ryne Sandberg, Cubs	40	434	10.85
5.	Glenn Davis, Astros	22	248	11.27
6.	Barry Bonds, Pirates	33	376	11.39
7.	Dave Justice, Braves	28	321	11.46
8.	Kal Daniels, Dodgers	27	320	11.85
9.	Ron Gant, Braves	32	417	13.03
10.	Tim Lincecum, Mets	10	132	13.20

By Philip Meneely



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- ☐ 7539 Jim Abbott
- ☐ 7544 Dale Murphy
- ☐ 7546 Paul Molitor
- ☐ 7540 Gary Sheffield
- ☐ 7583 Ozzie Smith
- ☐ 7514 Tom Brunansky
- ☐ 7598 Vince Coleman
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- ☐ 7564 Darryl Strawberry
- ☐ 7520 Greg Jefferies
- ☐ 7550 Kevin Elster

- ☐ 7503 Bobby Bonilla
- ☐ 7513 Andy Van Slyke
- ☐ 7590 Eric Davis
- ☐ 7500 Chris Sabo
- ☐ 7534 Barry Larkin
- ☐ 7583 Roger Clemens
- ☐ 7528 Wade Boggs
- ☐ 7515 Mike Greenwell
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THE GOOD DOCTOR

Buddy Ryan got the Philadelphia Eagles to the playoffs for three straight years. Hey, I wasn't crazy about the guy, but why was he fired?

M.D., BANNOCKBURN, ILL.

His number of Eagles playoff victories was the same as his summer diet: Ultra-Slim.

What were John Elway's last words of the 1990 season?

G.T., EL SEGUNDO, CALIF.

"I've fallen, and I can't get up."

I understand that tropical storm Marco did some damage last fall to the Augusta National Golf Club, home of the Masters. How bad was it?

J.N., NORTH PALM BEACH, FLA.

Pretty bad. First, the Seve Ballesteros Memorial Buoy in Rae's Creek was swept down the South Carolina coast. Then the maintenance shed, where tournament chairman Hord Hardin keeps the Magic Azelea Dust, was flooded. Finally, the roof blew off the top of the historic clubhouse, spilling Masters memorabilia all over the course. At one point NASA telescopes spotted Craig Stadler's green jacket and mistook it for Ireland.

I remember a 1969 tie for No. 1 in college football between Penn State and Texas. I also well remember that the Longhorns, from the great state of Texas, were the final choice. Who do you think was really No. 1 last year, Georgia Tech or Colorado?

R.N., SAN CLEMENTE, CALIF.

It depends. If you're talking downhill skiing, my vote's with Colorado. If you're talking mechanical engineering, I'll take those Yellow Jacketed nerds any day.

Your magazine could do some of us a great favor by reporting a little more about the great sport of rodeo.

P.A., CEDAR CITY, UTAH

OK. I think the calf to watch this season is Daisy, a tough newcomer out of Idaho who was heavily recruited by colleges throughout the Southwest. Also keep an eye on a steer named Big Betty, a versatile 1,275-pounder with an amazing vertical jump of six inches who is currently a holdout until her agent can renegotiate something to do with feed

What do they mean in pro football when they say "hitting a pass in the seams"?

F.E., JENKINTOWN, PA.

I don't know, but it sounds like something where you'd want to ask Kim Basinger if she can come out and play.

I've heard that the National Football League's in-the-grasp rule was almost voted out last spring. How did it ever get in the rulebook in the first place?

T.S., DALLAS

Randall Cunningham was still in high school.

I was surprised when baseball's "Mr. Clean," Dale Murphy, was traded to the Philadelphia Phillies last year from Atlanta. Has the City of Brotherly Shove changed him in any way?

B.H., LOS COLINAS, TEXAS

Sadly, yes. Murph was thrown out of a game last year for high-sticking. He's also let his "Watchtower" subscription run out.

What sort of commercials can we expect featuring San Francisco 49ers players this year?

B.W., MENLO PARK, CALIF.

Bubba Paris for Twinkies Anonymous, Jerry Rice for Magic Fingers recliners, and George Seifert for new, improved Coach-Cola.

This guy who left the Detroit Lions to take a job as offensive coordinator with the Atlanta Falcons—June Jones—who is he?

F.E., PHILADELPHIA

Alas, the product of another busted Hollywood marriage—June Allyson and Jack Jones.

Why did it take pitcher Gaylord Perry two years to make it to the Hall of Fame?

P.N., LILBURN, GA.

Those voters obviously don't know spit.

Zeke Mowatt of the New England Patriots got into a minor jam over that incident in the locker room. Is everything forgiven or forgotten?

V.K., TREVOSE, PA.

No. Zeke is now appearing nightly in a striptease review in downtown Boston, ac-

companied by five chorus girls wearing business suits and carrying notebooks and tape recorders.

How did Pete Rose manage to get out of jail so quickly?

F.V., NEW YORK

Like always, he had a good lead. When they opened the gate his right foot was already on the grass.

What are some of the teams in the new World Team Tennis League, which somebody decided needed to be recycled?

B.C., BOSTON

The Trenton Tantrum, the Penn Balls, the Chicago Wind Screens, and the San Andreas Fault.

Why did the NFL dispense with the off week between the conference title games and the Super Bowl last year?

P.R., RANCHO SANTE FE, CALIF.

Hmm, first I've heard about it. No wonder nobody showed up at my first annual Good Doctor, Good Times Super Bowl Party.

What's the one football play the University of Missouri's defense can never stop?

N.S., KELLOGG, IDAHO

Fifth and long.

Why is the U.S. vice president like a blooping base hit into short center field?

M.Q., LOGANSPOUT, IND.

Come on. Too easy, man.

Jane Fonda isn't really going to help Ted Turner with the Goodwill Games, is she?

T.H., ORMOND BEACH, FLA.

She sure is, especially with the stretching exercises for pregnant Soviet women.

Before dropping the sport of basketball, U.S. International gave up 186 points to Loyola Marymount in a game. What was their team nickname?

G.Z., OCEANSIDE, CALIF.

The Fighting Sieves. ■

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THE FAN

By MICHAEL MORIARTY

It's All About Teamwork

WHAT A GUY! MY grandfather, "Big George" Moriarty, was a major league baseball player in the early 1900s, an umpire, a vaudeville performer, a lecturer, and a Detroit Tigers manager. You could even say he was a character in the Billy Martin mold, because George was always ready with his fists; he flattened players who barreled into him, and was one of the few guys on the Tigers who wasn't afraid to take on the scrappy Ty Cobb.

George was clearly the charismatic figure, the romantic hero in my family when I was growing up in Detroit. He'd spin his yarns in a very histrionic way, even if this meant jumping on tables in restaurants to demonstrate how he stole catchers' signals while he was running the basepaths. He loved the spotlight, and those images of his storytelling were very important in my life and certainly helpful to my film career.

Big George and his baseball exploits were filled with aggressive male energy, the ability to attack without question. An actor definitely needs a female sensibility in order to be delicate, to deal with emotions in close-ups, but an actor's power comes from feeling comfortable with aggressiveness. And I owe a lot of that ability to the images provided by my grandfather when he talked of punching out opposing players.

Baseball has been very good to the Moriarty family on all sorts of fronts. The game is our Horatio Alger story: My grandfather pulled himself out of poverty through baseball and made a good living by being active in the sport for 50 years. In turn, his financial stability allowed him to send my father to medical school. And since my dad established a good life because of my grand-

father's connection to the game, he was able to make things possible for me. Baseball is clearly the common link; I wouldn't be where I am without baseball.

Then there's my appearing in "Bang the Drum Slowly," the film many people call the best baseball movie ever made. This was my big break. Before the film I was just a struggling actor, waiting on tables in New York, but once the film was a success people started to ask, "Who is this guy Moriarty?"

Preparing for the movie wasn't much of a stretch for me because I had seen ballplayers troop through my house all the time while I was growing up. But I still had to learn how to pitch, since as a kid I only focused on football and diving. I went to Mets games and patterned my throwing style on Tom Seaver. He was a very intellectual pitcher, well-organized, very artful. He was a minimalist, very economical in his movements. I felt comfortable with his style, but I did wind up with a problem that still affects me today—I threw my arm out. I was throwing hard to make the film realistic, but I didn't warm up properly, and my arm hasn't been the same since. I still

can't lift heavy things, and my arm does get sore.

But more importantly, during the shooting of the film I saw the camaraderie that's an integral part of baseball, and this had tremendous significance for me as an actor. It dawned on me that a successful ballclub is really a blending or uniting of many separate male egos, which are puffed up to begin with. Having all these cocks and roosters, the challenge is to get them to all work together. This was a key theme in "Bang the Drum." It's the truth of any team sport and also true in a TV series, for TV is really a competitive sport, a version of "Monday Night Football."

You're in a battle of ratings, and to prosper—certainly in a show like "Law and Order," which is an ensemble undertaking—it's a matter of group psychology. You have to keep your ego high enough to perform, but not so high that you overshadow others. You have to realize you're just part of a team, and "Bang the Drum" really helped me understand the lessons of my craft. My ego was much more subdued after the film. You could say I learned to work more effectively with a group of actors because of baseball.

In essence, I became a stronger human being after the film, and there's been a carryover from "Bang the Drum" to "Law and Order." I've learned that the best way to help the series is to help the other actors, to try to find their tempo and feed into it. So even if I don't go to dozens of ball games or passionately follow a particular club, I still know baseball gave me some very valuable insights. There are a lot of hurts in the acting profession, but Big George taught me there's no shame in a defeat when you know you did your best.

MICHAEL MORIARTY was unforgettable as Henry Wiggen in "Bang the Drum Slowly," and he's scoring another critical triumph starring in NBC's legal drama, "Law and Order."



A successful ballclub—like an ensemble cast—is a blending of many separate egos. You're part of a team. 'Bang the Drum Slowly' helped me understand the lessons of my craft.

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